This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

**Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

**About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

600054474U

# FRANCE:

ITS

# HISTORY AND REVOLUTIONS.

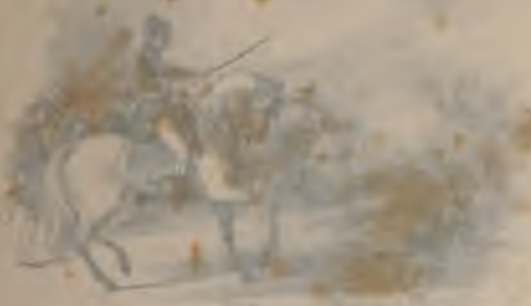
[*Right of translation is reserved.*]

# FRANCE

## ITS HISTORY AND REVOLUTIONS

BY

W. CHAMBERS



W. & R. CHAMBERS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
1871

237 f 72

# FRANCE

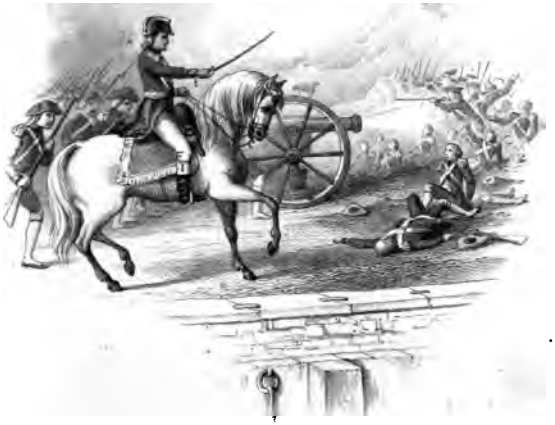
ITS

# HISTORY AND REVOLUTIONS

BY

W. CHAMBERS.

BODLEIANA BIBLIOTHECA



Bonaparte clearing the Quay of the Tuileries 1795

W. & R. CHAMBERS.
EDINBURGH AND LONDON.
1871.

237. f. 72.

# PREFATORY NOTE.

FREQUENT visits to France, and the deep interest which it is impossible not to feel concerning recent as well as current events, have suggested the writing of this small book, with the view of presenting a simple intelligible History of the French nation—its Rise, Progress, Revolutionary Tumults, and Reverses, with such remarks as spring from some acquaintance with the condition and character of the people. Of course, the book is in no respect designed to supersede the perusal of larger and more exhaustive works, of which there is an abundance.

The Story of France, though I may not have been successful in telling it, offers more than matter of entertainment. In the whole range of Historical literature, nothing presents so instructive a WARNING.

W. C.

EDINBURGH, *May* 1871.

# CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER I.



## CHAPTER II.



## CHAPTER III.



## CHAPTER IV.



## CHAPTER V.

## CHAPTER VI.



## CHAPTER VII.



## CHAPTER VIII.



## CHAPTER IX.



## CHAPTER X.



## CHAPTER XI.



## CHAPTER XII.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## CHAPTER XIV.



## CHAPTER XV.



## CHAPTER XVI.



## CHAPTER XVII.



## CHAPTER XVIII.



## CHAPTER XIX.



## CHAPTER XX.

# FRANCE:

## ITS HISTORY AND REVOLUTIONS.

---

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE GAULS—CONQUEST BY THE ROMANS.

THE country now known as France was, two thousand years ago, occupied by different tribes, chiefly of Celtic origin, who had made considerable advance as regards the arts and social circumstances. Some centuries previously, the Greeks had established small colonies at various places along the coast of the Mediterranean, near the mouth of the Rhone, and communicated to the natives a knowledge of sundry useful arts and commercial pursuits. The principal Greek settlement was called Massilia; whence the modern name Marseilles. At the time our history opens, the country was named GALLIA by the Romans, a designation which, transformed into GAUL by the English, we may trace to the original term *Celtæ* or *Keltæ*, the Celts, and which we see perpetuated in the familiar words *Gael* and *Gaelic.*

As modified by intercourse with the Greeks and Romans, the Gauls were by no means in a state of barbarism. They had fortified towns, with a civil and

military polity presided over by chiefs, reputed for their bravery. They were skilled in war, for which they were well provided with horses, chariots, and arms. Fond of ornament, their clothing and equipments were picturesque; and as they wore long flowing hair, their appearance in warlike costume was particularly striking. With a teeming population, and warlike propensities, they made various inroads on Spain and the north of Italy, with a view to secure lands for settlement. They were so successful in these invasions that, previous to 400 B.C., they had established themselves in northern Italy, which became known as Cisalpine Gaul. Pushing their way through the country of the Etruscans, they even penetrated as far as Rome, which they several times attacked, retiring with no little booty.

The Romans were not a people to endure encroachments of this nature. A resolution was formed to conquer the whole of Gaul, on the north as well as south of the Alps. As a beginning, Cisalpine Gaul was subjugated about 170 B.C.; and a few years later the Romans overran and secured that extensive district of Gaul on the Mediterranean, which, being constituted a Province of the state, acquired the name Provence, by which it is still popularly known. This region, watered by the Rhone and other rivers, abounding in picturesque hills and fertile valleys, with sunny slopes to the south, became a favourite resort for Roman families of distinction. Of this we have the best evidence in the gigantic ruins of the amphitheatres at Nîmes, Arles, and Frejus, the triumphal arches at Aix and Orange, and the aqueducts, temples, and other architectural remains which survive the havoc of the middle ages, and are now objects of curiosity to the traveller.

Before Provence had been well settled by the Romans, the whole of Gaul was conquered by Julius Cæsar, 58 to 50 B.C. This conquest by the Romans is the first great fact in French history. Cæsar has given an account of his campaigns in his famed Commentaries on the wars in Gaul; in which, speaking of himself in the third person, he makes us acquainted with the difficulties he encountered in subduing the different tribes. He opens his narrative with the statement, that 'all Gaul is divided into three parts,' each occupied by a people 'differing from each other in language, customs, and laws;' but although there may have been three principal divisions, with some distinction as to dialect and usages, it is understood that there was a general uniformity in character. The most marked difference was seen in the Aquitani, a people who lived in the district adjoining the Pyrenees, and who, from recent investigations, appear to have belonged to a race of still greater antiquity than the Celts; the memorials of such an early race being even now observable in various parts of western Europe.

Whatever was the precise origin of the Gallic tribes, they had for the most part adopted one or other of the dialects of the Celtic language, and fierce and intractable, they were not subdued by Cæsar without protracted and desperate encounters. In particular, he experienced much difficulty in overcoming a tribe which dwelt among the mountains of Auvergne, commanded by a warrior of great strategic skill and bravery, whose name, being unknown, has been commemorated by the designation Vercingetorix, signifying chief or general. The town of Gergovia, occupying the flat top of a mountain (near the present town of Clermont-Ferrand), was so strongly

fortified, and so ably defended, that the Roman armies were effectually baffled and forced to retire. It was only after much harassing warfare that the tribe was conquered; when brave Vercingetorix yielding himself prisoner, was, to the discredit of Cæsar, cruelly put to death.

Losing their independence, the Gauls in time adopted the manners, the language, and the laws of the Romans, in which respect the circumstances of their conquest differed considerably from what occurred in Britain, where the native Celts, in great numbers, fled before the Roman arms, and found a permanent refuge among the mountains of Wales and the Highlands of Scotland, where their descendants still retain the characteristics of an ancient Celtic people. It was one of the wise provisions of the Roman sway to communicate the privileges of Roman citizenship to the people of the countries which they colonised and brought into subjection. Accordingly, there sprung up in the larger towns of Gaul a system of municipal corporations, which were long strongholds of civic freedom. The chief cities in modern France can trace their history to the time when they flourished under Roman domination. At this early period, Paris, called *Lutetia*, and Lyons, called *Lugdunum*, were already noted as important seats of population. The name Paris is derived from the Parisii, a Gallic people so called by the Romans. Their city being built in a defensible position on an island in the Seine, became frequently the object of warlike contest.

Previous to their conquest by the Romans, the Gauls, like all the old Celtic nations, adhered to the religion of the Druids, which was a species of Paganism, with some superstitious reference to the heavenly bodies.

According to Cæsar, the Druids acted as priests, teachers, and judges, and conducted their religious worship in the recesses of forests. It has been usually considered that the circles of upright stones, still existing in various parts of France and the British Islands, are the remains of Druidic temples; but of this there is no certainty. It is now conjectured with more probability, that these circles, as well as several other rude stone structures—some consisting of slabs piled one on the other in the form of tables, and variously known as *dolmens* or *cromlechs*—are of an antiquity anterior to the Druids, though they may have been used by them in their ceremonial observances. The whole of these relics, which are exceedingly curious, point to an origin of which there is no record in history.

The Romans made earnest efforts to extirpate the Druidic faith and practices in Gaul, and to a certain extent they succeeded in introducing their own fanciful polytheism, as is evidenced by the stone altars, dedicated to different heathen gods, found in many parts of France. The Druidic and the Roman superstitions both yielded in time to the teaching of Christian missionaries, one of whom, St Denis, suffered martyrdom at Paris about 260 A.D. On the establishment of Christianity in the empire by Constantine, about 320 A.D., all the old forms of heathenism disappeared, and the country passed under the clerical rule of a regular body of ecclesiastics. Of these, none obtained greater celebrity for his learning and sanctity than St Martin of Tours, who flourished in the latter part of the fourth century; and from whose annual festival is derived the winter term (November 11), called Martinmas.

During their occupancy of Gaul, the Romans effected

a number of improvements, not the least of which consisted in roads made in various directions, and extending from Rome to the shores of the British Channel. Remains of the old Roman roads are still visible, the most interesting being that which was carried along the rugged shores of the Mediterranean by way of Nice. The Romans also did much to advance the interests of the Gauls, by introducing, or at least extending, the culture of several sub-tropical plants, including the vine, olive, orange, lemon, and fig, which grow with great luxuriance in the south, and now form staple products of the country.

The Romans bore sway in Gaul for upwards of four hundred and fifty years. The part latest abandoned was Provence. The natives, almost everywhere picking up the language of the intruders, had become Romanised Celts, and were identified with the Latin-speaking nations. However beneficent was in many respects the Roman rule, it was also somewhat injurious; for the tutelage of a whole people, as of individuals, has always an enervating and detrimental effect. It was so in Gaul as well as in Britain under Roman protection and guidance. The native race lost much of their sturdy independence of character; and, as it proved, they were unable to contend successfully against the torrents of invaders who poured in upon them on the decay and dismemberment of the Roman empire at the beginning of the fifth century.

## CHAPTER II.

### CONQUEST OF ROMANISED GAULS BY THE FRANKS—THE MEROVINGIAN AND CARLOVINGIAN DYNASTIES.

EVER since the days of Cæsar, Gaul had been troubled with the menaces and attempted invasions of Teutonic or German tribes who occupied the right bank of the Rhine. When the Roman protection was enfeebled, the encroachments of these tribes increased in audacity. In the fifth century, three Teutonic or German tribes established themselves in Gaul—the Visigoths on the south, the Burgundians on the east, and the Franks on the north. These invaders are understood to have been impelled forward by hordes of Huns, an Asiatic race, who at this era made forays into Europe, plundering and driving everything before them, and who finally established themselves in a country on the Danube, which takes from them the name Hungary.

There is no distinct account of the cessation of Roman rule in Gaul, and the manner of settlement of the Teutonic tribes. It is only known that there was much fighting and commotion, as also much suffering on the part of the Romanised Celts, before the new-comers had made themselves at home in the country. The Franks —a name assumed to signify freemen—poured in from the countries east of the Rhine, and from that part of

the Netherlands known as Brabant. Just as it was the fortune of England to derive its national designation from the Angles, who invaded it from the continent, so was the name France derived from the colony of Franks who intruded themselves into Gaul, and obtained supremacy, about the middle of the fifth century. This settlement of the Franks is the second important fact in French history.

It does not appear that the various bodies of Teutonic invaders made any serious change in the language and the religion of the population. The ecclesiastical and municipal institutions survived the shock of repeated invasions. Nor did there arise any perceptible change in the character of the people. Inasmuch as the intruders were numerically much fewer than the descendants of the ancient inhabitants, they were in time absorbed and lost sight of. This circumstance corresponds with the well-known truth in ethnology—the science which treats of varieties in races—that in the blending of races of mankind, the physical features and mental character of the larger mass ultimately predominate. On this account it is important to note, as throwing some light on their history, that the French, after innumerable vicissitudes, have remained essentially a Celtic people. Their language is a variety of the Latin which they acquired from the Romans, with but a slight infusion of the Teutonic forms of speech; and till this day their general character is very much what it was described in the works of various ancient writers. By Cæsar and others, they are spoken of as vain and quarrelsome, fickle in their sentiments, impulsive, fond of novelties, hot in attack, but quickly discouraged in defeat. They were more brave than considerate,

and in their sacrifices of slaves in the religious services of the Druids, they were guilty of extreme cruelty. This, however, was a universal failing among pagan nations; and not until the teaching of Christianity had softened the natural ruggedness of character, were sentiments of humanity either understood or acted on.

While Gaul was in the course of settlement by a dominant horde of Franks, it was exposed on its north-western shores to an invasion of a remarkable nature from the opposite coast of Britain. The withdrawal of the Romans from Britain led, as is well known, to irruptions into that island of Angles, Saxons, and Jutes. Fleeing from these intruders, the natives, who, in Cornwall and its vicinity, had never been Romanised, sought refuge on the coast of Gaul. Flights of this kind took place from the middle of the fifth to the middle of the sixth century. Arriving in the peninsula, of which Brest is now the principal port, the numerous refugees from Britain were among kindred tribes of Celts, who, in their remote and mountainous territory, had been so slightly affected by the Romans as still to speak their ancient tongue. With these the Britons appear to have readily blended; the province took from them the name Bretagne or Brittany; and although passing under the rule of the Franks, the natives, as well as the immigrants from Britain, changed neither their language nor their usages, but long remained a people in many respects peculiar. Even now, after a lapse of twelve hundred years, the manners and character of the Bretons differ somewhat from those of their French neighbours.

Establishing themselves in Gaul, the Franks retained their former possessions in Germany. The first king of

the united territory was Clovis, or Chlodwig, a name which in modern German assumes the form Ludwig, and in French Louis. Clovis flourished at the close of the fifth century. Embracing Christianity, he was baptised at Rheims, 496 A.D. From this circumstance, that ancient city—formerly the capital of a Celtic tribe called the Remi, and hence its name—acquired such a deeply religious interest as to become the place for the coronation of the kings of France.

Clovis is sometimes spoken of as the first king of France, which is scarcely correct. The country we call France had not as yet acquired that designation, nor had it any distinct political existence for some centuries later. Clovis was, properly speaking, king of the Franks, and his kingdom was styled *Frankenric*, the Frankish monarchy. From Clovis's grandfather, a chief named Merewig, or Merowæus, the ruling family became known as the Merovingian dynasty. Of this primary dynasty, there were, besides Clovis, several kings named Clotaire, and others named Childeric, Chilperic, and Dagobert. Of the whole of them little good is recorded.

In subduing and taking possession of countries by military violence, it became at this, and a later time, the practice in Europe, for the king or conqueror to give lands to chiefs on which they might settle and exercise sway. The terms of such gifts were, that the chiefs should be ready, by themselves and their retainers, to help the sovereign in time of war, and otherwise yield a loyal obedience. To Clovis is usually ascribed the introduction of this practice among his subordinates, when securing his rule over Gaul; a practice which grew, in process of time, into a regular feudal system in

the country. It was a system of superiors and vassals, graduated to meet the exigencies of an unsettled state of society. The kings were the superiors of the feudatories, and they in turn were the superiors of the vassals or tenants who held lands from them. Beneath all, there were bodies of serfs or bondsmen, who, for the most part, were not at liberty to quit the soil on which they were born, but were disposed of along with it.

To regulate a system so complicated in its obligations, there sprung up among the Franks a body of law, known as the *Salic* law—the name Salic being of doubtful origin, but generally supposed to be derived from the Salians, one of the Frankish tribes. According to the Salic law, no female could inherit the lands of a feudatory; for the simple reason that females could not render that military service for which the lands were held of the sovereign. By a species of analogy, the rule of excluding females from succession to the French crown came to be a recognised principle, though it sometimes became the cause of civil war.

From the introduction of the feudal system by the Merovingian dynasty is dated the rise of those dukes, counts, and other highly privileged personages who figure in the history of the country; some of them attaining to an almost independent supremacy in the provinces in which they held feudal rule. By considerate historians, the feudal system in its early stages is deemed to have been beneficial in limiting an excess of power in the sovereign, and so saving a government from sinking to the character of an Oriental despotism; but it is equally certain—and this is a fact of the utmost significance in French history—that the system grew into a gigantic abuse, and, though modified

in the course of ages, it obstructed the rise of an independent middle class, was detrimental to the general progress of society, and ultimately led to overwhelming national disasters.

With the disappearance of the Romans, and the rise of the Frankish power, the middle ages—or medieval period, as they are sometimes styled—begin. These ages were a long dreary period of strife, injustice, and suffering, relieved by only one beneficent institution, the Church, and ultimately the spirit of chivalry, which professed to succour the oppressed. It is to this period we have to refer the building of the older cathedrals, churches, and monasteries, many of them still in good condition, and the feudal castles now in ruin on the banks of the Rhine and other picturesque localities.

During the rule of the Merovingian dynasty, there arose a practice of delivering splendid habits to the members of their households on the occasion of great festivals; from which originated the usage of feudal retainers wearing a dress of particular colours, and with distinctive badges pertaining to their superiors. From the circumstance that these dresses and badges were originally *given*, in French *livré*, comes the English word *livery*, a phrase of honourable distinction in the middle ages, perpetuated in the official garb of civic guilds (whence the 'liverymen' of London), and in the attire of public and private servants. The wearing of livery is thus traceable to a Frankish custom in the sixth century.

The Merovingian dynasty expired at the beginning of the eighth century. It had become the custom to appoint an official, styled Mayor of the Palace, to conduct the government in the manner of a modern

prime-minister. One of these, named Charles Martel, signifying Charles the Hammer, rose to power in 714 A.D., and his rule gave a new turn to Frankish history. Charles rendered himself notable for his extraordinary skill and bravery in relieving his dominions from the invasion of the Saracens, whom he defeated in several battles, and drove back into Spain. He died in the midst of his victories, 741.

Charles Martel left the government of the kingdom to his two sons, Pepin and Carloman. Pepin, known in history as Pepin *le Bref*, or Pepin the Short, acquired the entire government by dispossessing the sons of Carloman; and by an act of usurpation succeeded in setting entirely aside Childeric III., the last of the Merovingian dynasty, and getting himself installed as king of the Franks, 752.

Pepin was the first king of the Carlovingian dynasty, which has been so called either from Pepin's father, Charles Martel, or from Pepin's son, Charlemagne. Pepin was an able and valorous sovereign. Having recommended himself to the clergy by his professions of attachment to the church, they assisted at his consecration; this being the first ceremony of the kind among the Franks. Pepin did not fall short of the expectations formed of him. With a powerful army, he relieved Rome from the attacks of the Lombards, a race from the north of Germany which had settled in the north of Italy, and were at the time masters of Italy; after which important service, he took from the Lombards Ravenna and some other of their possessions, and assigned them as a patrimony to the church. This transaction took place, 754, from which, accordingly, was dated the temporal power of the pope. Pepin afterwards

consolidated the Frankish monarchy by reconquering Aquitaine, a province which, extending at first from the Garonne, and afterwards from the Loire, to the Pyrenees, had given some trouble by an assumption of independence. Pepin died 768.

On Pepin's decease, his sons, Charles and Carloman, were jointly his successors; but by the death of Carloman, and the exclusion of both his sons from the throne, Charles, who subsequently acquired the name Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, became sole king of the Franks. Charlemagne's great military genius was first evinced in a defensive war against the Saxons, by which he extended his dominions in Germany, securing his conquests by castles and garrisons. Called to the aid of Pope Adrian I. against the Lombards, he crossed the Alps from Geneva, with two armies, by the Great St Bernard and Mont Cenis, in 773, and overthrew the kingdom of the Lombards. The Lombard dukes acknowledged him as their king, and he secured the pope's favour by confirming the gift which Pepin had made of Ravenna, 774. He was crowned at Milan by the pope with the iron crown of the Lombards, a crown reserved for similar ceremonials in a later age.

After this, Charlemagne was, on different occasions, engaged in suppressing revolts in Saxony, in subduing the Saracens in Spain, part of which country he added to his dominions, and in effecting victories over the Bulgarians and Huns. In the midst of these warlike undertakings, he went, in 781, to Italy, where the pope crowned his second son king of Italy, and his third son Louis, an infant three years old, king of Aquitaine. Ordinarily, in the intervals of peace, he dwelt at Aachen, as it is called in Germany, but better known by its

modern French appellation, Aix-la-Chapelle, which he enriched with a palace and cathedral, and chose as a favourite place of residence.

Proceeding to Italy to support Pope Leo III. against the rebellious Romans, Charlemagne was invested with an important honorary distinction. When worshipping in St Peter's Church (not the modern St Peter's), on Christmas-day, 800, the pope unexpectedly, as it appeared, set a crown upon his head, and, amidst the acclamations of the people, saluted him as Carolus Augustus, emperor of the Romans. The act constituted Charlemagne successor of the old Roman emperors who had long since disappeared; and though the title imparted no real power, it greatly confirmed and increased the respect entertained for the great Frankish monarch. Such was the simple and ceremonial origin of the long line of emperors and kings of Germany which existed for more than a thousand years.

The life of this great medieval sovereign was not merely devoted to military enterprises. Charlemagne zealously endeavoured to promote education, agriculture, arts, manufactures, and commerce. He improved the political and social institutions, and projected great national works. He possessed an amount of learning unusual in his age; he could speak Latin and Greek, and encouraged learned men to come about his court. To the church he was a munificent benefactor; and to his exertions is due the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity. Desirous to possess a complete copy of the Bible, he employed Alcuin, a native of England, and one of the most industrious and ingenious monks of his time, to prepare a copy, which was executed by the labour of twenty-two years, from 778 to 800 A.D. This

singularly precious Bible of Charlemagne is preserved in the British Museum.

The fame of Charlemagne spread to all parts of the world having any connection with Europe. His contemporary was the Calif Harun-al-Raschid, who sent ambassadors to salute him. He enjoyed good health till shortly before his death, 28th January 814, when seventy-two years of age. He was buried in a capacious vault in the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle; not laid in a tomb in the usual manner, but fixed in a sitting attitude on a marble throne, dressed in the imperial robes, with a sceptre in his hand, the sword Joyeuse by his side, and a crown upon his head. On his knees was laid a copy of the Gospels, and hung from a girdle at his side was the pilgrim's pouch which he had borne while in life. There, by a strange attempt to extend life's fleeting honours into the realms of death, was left in ghastly state the mortal frame of the great Frankish king; and there it remained, sinking into decay and tatters, for a space of a hundred and eighty-three years. In 997 the vault was opened by the emperor Otho, and the relics being removed to the open church above, a few of them are still preserved as objects of curiosity or veneration. The crown of Charlemagne was taken to Vienna.

The greatness of Charlemagne did not exempt him from family misfortunes. In 810, he lost his second son, Pepin, who had been anointed king of Lombardy; and next year, 811, his eldest son, Karl or Charles, died. He had but one son left, Louis or Ludwig, king of Aquitaine, whom, in 813, he assumed as joint ruler of the empire. This arrangement lasted but a year. By the decease of Charlemagne in 814, Louis became sole emperor; his vast dominions comprehending all that had been subject

to his father, except Italy, which Charlemagne had assigned to his grandson Bernhard, a son of Pepin. There were good hopes of Louis, but nature had not qualified him for the dignity of emperor. He wanted the genius of his father. By his French-speaking subjects he was styled Louis *le Débonnaire*—the easy, good-natured, weak. He might also have been called the extravagant and the wicked. He began by squandering the crown domains in fiefs to his favourites. Next, he divided his dominions among his three sons, which led to strife and confusion. His nephew Bernhard, standing in the way of these arrangements for his sons, was treacherously enticed to Châlons, where his eyes were put out, and he died. The wife of Louis having died, he married again, and this second wife instigated him to a fresh division of the empire, 829, to provide for her infant son Charles. There ensued an indescribable period of parricidal and fratricidal war; the sons being divided into factions, which committed the greatest atrocities. At length Louis le Débonnaire, who, in French history, takes rank as Louis I., was released from all his troubles by death, 840.

We now arrive at that important event, the breaking up of Charlemagne's mighty empire, to which is to be traced much of the political condition of modern continental Europe. One of Louis's sons having predeceased him, he left three to divide and inherit his dominions. These were named Lothair, Louis, and Charles. The division took place by the famous treaty of Verdun in 843. Lothair, the eldest, got the title of emperor, along with the following possessions: That portion of the Frankish territories which consisted of a long strip along the left bank of the Rhine, beginning at

its mouth, and embracing the basins of the Scheldt, the Meuse, and the Moselle; whence it proceeded along the valleys of the Saône and Rhone to the Mediterranean; and finally included the kingdom of Italy. This strip, which extended across Europe, we may call Middle Frankland. Louis obtained all that lay on the east of the Rhine, which forms the chief part of modern Germany, and was then called East Frankland; hence he is styled in history Louis the German. Charles, the youngest son, got the whole of old Gaul that lay west of Lothair's kingdom. It was called West Frankland, or, in Latin, *Francia Occidentalis.* Hence the term France, and the origin of the French as a distinct people.

There were soon subdivisions. At Lothair's death in 855, his three sons divided his possessions. Louis II. got the kingdom of Italy, and the imperial dignity; Charles, the Saône and Rhone portion of Middle Frankland; and Lothair II., the northern part along the Rhine, which was called Lothair's kingdom, in German Lothringen, abbreviated by the French into Lorraine, the name which still adheres to a portion of it. On the death of these three, there were fresh divisions; and in the course of time East Frankland parted into those petty kingdoms and grand-duchies which now, after an interval of a thousand years, there is an effort to reconsolidate into German unity.

In the southern part of Middle Frankland along the Rhone, there arose, after the treaty of Verdun, a Burgundian kingdom, usually called the kingdom of Arles, from the residence of its founder. At first it paid homage to the German emperors, but afterwards the greater part of it was incorporated with France.

We are not, however, to confound this ancient Burgundian kingdom with the dukedom of Burgundy, which was a creation of the tenth century, and consisted of a territory in the valley of the Saône.

While the Franks have communicated the name *France* to the larger portion of old Gaul, they are remembered in Germany by the names of two cities—*Frankfort*-on-the-Oder, and *Frankfort*-on-the-Maine—the latter having been constituted the capital of the German empire at the great upbreak of the Frankish dominions in 843. They were likewise commemorated in the name *Franken* (in general literature, *Franconia*), applied, until comparatively recent times, to a district of country which included the archbishopric of Mayence. What concerns us here is the history of West Frankland, the France of modern times.

## CHAPTER III.

### FRANCE BECOMES A DISTINCT MONARCHY, 843—SETTLEMENT OF THE NORMANS—THE CAPETIAN DYNASTY.

BY the treaty of Verdun, 843, Charles, grandson of Charlemagne, and distinguished as Charles the Bald, was invested with the greater part of old Gaul, which in the way we have described became known as France. The French monarchy, therefore, apart from all Teutonic connection, dates from the middle of the ninth century, and was hereditarily a branch of the Carlovingian dynasty. Correctly speaking, Charles the Bald was the first king of France, though he is not ordinarily so styled. At the time of his accession, France had considerably advanced in population, and the greater number of the presently existing towns had come into existence. Things generally, however, were in an unsettled condition. The country was harassed with an entirely new order of invaders by sea, who came from the north of Europe. Known as Northmen, or Normans, they issued in warlike incursions from Scandinavia, part of which is the modern Denmark, and made havoc with the newly set up kingdom of France. In their vessels they ascended the Seine and the Loire, besieging Paris, and plundering and burning Orleans.

These Norman invasions in the latter half of the ninth and beginning of the tenth century, constitute another

great fact in early French history. Charles the Bald tried by bribes to buy off the ruthless intruders, but this temporising policy only led to renewed incursions. At length, after many years of torment, during the reigns of several successive kings, Charles the Simple came to definite terms with Rolf or Rollo, a Norman prince, leader of the invading hosts. The terms were, that Rollo should consent to be baptised and embrace the Christian religion; that he should be married to his daughter Gisela, and receive as a fief the province of Neustria, for which he should yield homage to the crown. These exceedingly favourable terms being accepted, Rollo was baptised, assuming the name Robert. The date of this remarkable event was 912. The old designation Neustria being about the same time laid aside, the province was entitled Normandy, and Robert, Duke of Normandy, as he was called, attained to the distinction of being one of the twelve peers of France.

The settlement of the Normans gave a new character to the province. They became the founders of a new race in France—a race fresh and energetic, physically vigorous, and of high mental qualities. The settlement of the Normans proved therefore beneficial to the country. Adopting the religion and usages of the French, the settlers in Normandy speedily distinguished themselves as the bravest soldiers, the boldest sailors, and the most skilful and tasteful artisans. High-minded and patriotic, they took the lead in all daring enterprises. Rouen was their capital, which under them became a splendid city. Besides this principal town, other places were adorned by them with cathedrals and churches of a noble style of architecture,

which till our own times remain the admiration of the world. Within two hundred years of their settlement in France, the Normans developed a great school of narrative poetry, whose cultivators in the twelfth century, the *Trouveurs*, rivalled in celebrity the lyrical *Troubadours* of southern France. To the people of Great Britain, however, the Normans are chiefly interesting historically, from their conquest of England in 1066, under Duke William II., son of Robert II. The descendant of a Scandinavian *Viking*, or sea-rover, occupied the English throne, and became founder of the Norman dynasty.

The exploit of crossing the Channel with a body of Norman-French, and effecting the conquest of England, was commemorated by Queen Matilda, wife of the Conqueror, by a remarkable piece of needlework, which received the name of the Bayeux Tapestry, from being preserved in a public building at Bayeux, in Normandy. It consists of a long web of canvas, on which is worked a vast number of figures representing the principal circumstances connected with the Conquest. Tradition, with much probability, ascribes this laborious work to the needle of Matilda; it is at least known that she superintended its execution, and presented it to the cathedral of Bayeux. The tapestry, in good preservation, remains one of the most interesting objects of historical value in France.

The Carlovingian dynasty terminated in 987, by the death of Louis V., styled Louis *le Fainéant*, or the Sluggard, who left no direct heirs. An election took place, when the appointment fell on Hugh Capet, a personage of wealth and ability occupying the position of Duke of France, Burgundy, and Aquitaine, and Count of Paris and Orleans. He was grandson of Eudes,

Count of Paris, who, in the time of Carloman, brother of Charles the Simple, had done good service by defending Paris against an attack by the Normans. It was a new thing to appoint a king by election; but circumstances rendered it necessary. The affairs of the kingdom, as has been said, were in deplorable disorder—a result of the vicious practice of creating feudal chiefs, who in their respective territories levied taxes for their own use, and left the sovereign with no special means to carry on the business of the state, and maintain his power. Hugh Capet being the most noted of these feudatories, and generally esteemed for his sagacity and valour, had no difficulty in assembling the principal crown-vassals, with the leading ecclesiastical dignitaries, and getting himself elected king of France. The choice was confirmed by the pope. The only objection was that offered by Charles of Lorraine, a relative of the deceased monarch; but he was disposed of in the usual cruel way. He was seized, and confined in prison till he died; and when his son and successor died without issue, the race of the Carlovingians was extinct, 991.

By Hugh Capet, Paris was made the capital of the kingdom. Under his successors it rose into considerable importance; churches and colleges were founded, and the Parisian merchants formed a powerful guild. In the general history of France, for three centuries after the accession of the Capetian dynasty, there occurs little worthy of remembrance. There were incessant and worthless contests among the titled feudal chiefs, over whom the kings had but little control, and great barbarities were practised. The conquest of England by Duke William of Normandy introduced a new cause

of discord, for the Anglo-Norman kings were more powerful than the kings of France, to whom they stood in the relation of vassals, not only as regards Normandy, but eventually Anjou, Aquitaine, and other fiefs. Anjou had fallen to the English monarchs by the marriage of Plantagenet, Count of Anjou, to Matilda, daughter of Henry I., and mother of Henry II. The case of Aquitaine was remarkable. In 1137, this ancient duchy, which became known as Guienne, was united to the crown of France by the marriage of Eleanor, its heiress, to Louis VII. Eleanor having been divorced for consanguinity in 1152, afterwards married Henry II. of England, who claimed it in her right. Out of this entanglement of English rule and French allegiance there arose much to disturb the peace of the two countries.

Happily, the ferocity of the period was partially allayed by the rise of chivalry, a term derived from *chevalier*, a horseman or knight. Chivalry had some existence among the Franks; but as a positive and well-recognised institution it was developed in France during the eleventh century, about the time of the Norman Conquest. It came to maturity in connection with feudal usages. In the mansions of the barons the youth of the higher classes were instructed in those rules of chivalry which formed the principal part of their education. To be courteous in manners, to endure hardship, to be brave and unselfish, to succour those who were exposed to unjust or cruel treatment, and, above all, to honour and protect females, formed the leading principles of the code of chivalry. Wounds and death were to be held of no account in a good cause. The only thing to be shunned was the slightest stain on the honour of knighthood.

These high-souled principles of chivalry were obviously

a result of that universal weakness of the law which left the redress of wrongs to the action of individuals. As if to inspire the chivalric spirit, and furnish plenty of work for its exercise, an enthusiasm broke forth in France which spread to other countries in Europe, having for its object the rescue of Palestine, or the Holy Land, from the thraldom of the Mohammedans. The religious wars which ensued, known in history as the Crusades, commenced in 1096, and, carried on at intervals with varying success, lasted till 1291, a period of nearly two hundred years; the result being so wholly fruitless as to leave Palestine in the undisturbed possession of the Saracens. Yet, the Crusades, though failing in their aim, and attended with great loss of life and suffering, were of some value. They stirred up the general intellect, led to international intercourse, and, with an enlarged system of commerce, produced many social changes. The Crusades, therefore, with all their frantic errors, form an important incident in the progress of European civilisation. Among the princes and other individuals who distinguished themselves in the Crusades, was a gallant leader, Godfrey of Bouillon, who took Jerusalem by assault, 1099, and who died after being a short time acknowledged as its king.

In a series of seven sovereigns, from Hugh Capet to Louis IX., the only one whose reign is memorable for any work of art was that of Philippe II., ordinarily styled Philippe Augustus—1179–1223. It was during his reign that the cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris was built, though, from its extent and magnificence, it was not completed till a later age. The reign of Philippe is further remarkable for the crusade in which Richard Cœur de Lion was engaged, and for the resumption of

Normandy, which ceased to be a fief in the reign of King John in England. Louis VIII., who succeeded Philippe II., is less favourably remembered. During his short reign (1223–1226), there was carried on a keen persecution of a large body of persons in the district of Albigeois in Languedoc, on account of their alleged heretical opinions. Of these unhappy individuals, known as Albigenses, many hundreds of thousands perished by the sword and otherwise. At length, the Albigensian heresy, as it was called—a forerunner of the Reformed doctrines of the sixteenth century—was, by a severity of measures, extirpated as an open profession of belief; but it left behind it that traditional sentiment, which, at a later time, was evinced in the Protestantism of the south of France. The establishment of the Inquisition and of the order of Friars belongs to this period.

Languedoc, which as a fief was forfeited through its connection with an Albigensian leader, the Count of Thoulouse, consisted of a generally mountainous district of country on the west side of the Rhone, with the Mediterranean on the south, and having Toulouse for its capital. Opposite to it, on the east bank of the Rhone, were the provinces of Dauphiné and Provence. The whole, an early seat of the Romans, and removed considerably from the Teutonic incursions, constituted a somewhat distinct and peculiar district of France in the middle ages. The inhabitants spoke a dialect, called the Provençal, or *langue d'oc*—hence the term Languedoc—which differed from that spoken in northern France, known as the *langue d'oui* or *langue d'oil*. The distinction thus indicated arose from the word employed for *yes*. In the south it was *oc*, from the Latin *hoc;* in the north *oc* was compounded with *il*, and shortened into *oil* (*oui*). The

capital of Provence was Aix, which had been a favourite resort of the Romans on account of its hot mineral waters. In the twelfth century, it became a centre of attraction to the Troubadours, who sang their impassioned poetry in the langue d'oc; two to three centuries later, Aix, under its feudatory kings—some of them men of refined tastes—was noted for its gaiety, luxury, and cultivation of the fine arts. Thus there arose two spots of intelligence and refinement in France—Normandy in the north, and Languedoc and Provence in the south; and both may be said to have exerted a material influence in the diffusion of ideas which surmounted the barbarisms of the medieval period.

Louis IX., son of Louis VIII., and who ascended the throne in 1226, was a learned and intelligent monarch, and animated with the prevailing enthusiasm regarding the Crusades, in which he took part. He built the *Sainte-Chapelle*, a beautiful work of art in Paris; established the Sorbonne, an eminent academic body for theological students in the same city; and gave so many tokens of piety and attachment to the church, that at his death he was canonised, and is therefore usually called St Louis. As a legislator, he is noted for a code of criminal law, much required at the time, entitled the *Etablissements* of St Louis, which enforced discrimination in punishments. He further was successful in strengthening the monarchy, by absorbing certain fiefs which had been a source of trouble to the state. His brother, Charles of Anjou, was chosen by the pope as the king of Naples and Sicily, a circumstance which led to subsequent French claims on Naples.

St Louis died of the plague, while besieging Tunis in 1270. He left several sons, the elder of whom

succeeded him as Philippe III., and his youngest son was Robert, Count of Clermont and Lord of Bourbon, the ancestor of the whole branches of the House of Bourbon. Philippe III. died in 1285, when he was succeeded by his son, Philippe IV. A younger son, Charles, Count of Valois, was the ancestor of the Valois branch of the royal family. Philippe IV., surnamed *le Bel*, is noted for having given prominence to the burgher element in the nation. On the 28th March 1302, he called together the *états généraux*, or states-general, at which the *tiers état*, the third estate or burgher class, appeared with the nobles and clergy. This recognition of power in the commons marks an advance in the political history of the country, and corresponds with what occurred about the same time in England and Scotland, where the kings, for their own security, had to confer privileges on the commons and burghal municipalities. By the decease of Philippe IV. in 1314, he was succeeded by his son Louis X., who died in 1316. A posthumous child of Louis X., named John I., having lived only a few days, a second son of Philippe IV. succeeded as Philippe V., and he was succeeded by a third son, Charles IV. On the death of this last in 1327, the direct Capetian line, as regards heirs male, was extinct, and by the Salic law the succession devolved on Philippe of the House of Valois, son of Charles of Valois, brother of Philippe *le Bel*, who ascended the throne as Philippe VI.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE WARS BETWEEN FRANCE AND ENGLAND, 1339–1455.

NOW begins upwards of a century of desolating war between France and England, relieved only by temporary truces to enable the combatants to attend to other matters, and recruit their respective forces. The cause of the war was the accession of Philippe VI., whose right to the throne was disputed by Edward III. of England. Denying the validity of the Salic law, Edward insisted that he had a preferable claim to the throne of France, in right of his mother, Isabella, daughter of Philippe IV. To this source of discord was added a festering disagreement regarding the vassalage exacted from the English monarchs, on account of Guienne and other fiefs. The embittered quarrel was now to be fought out. Substantially, the question to be settled was the assumption of superiority by England over France. Taken in connection with Edward's base attempt, in emulation of his father and grandfather, to secure the sovereignty of Scotland, he is chargeable with a most unjustifiable degree of ambition.

The war with France began in 1339, and, extending through the reigns of Philippe VI., John II., Charles V., and Charles VI., was not ended until the reign of Charles VII. The French had the advantage of fighting a

war of defence in their own country; but as their forces consisted mainly of knights and feudal retainers, they suffered in comparison with the English armies, which embraced large numbers of yeomen—a rural middle class, descendants of the Anglo-Saxons, well skilled in archery. On the 26th August 1346 was fought the memorable battle of Cressy, or Crécy (a small town to the north of Abbeville), where Edward, with 40,000 English soldiers, gained a complete victory over a French army which, according to Froissart the historian, amounted to 100,000 men. The flower of the French chivalry was slain, as well as the kings of Bohemia and Majorca, who were fighting on the side of France. In this battle, Edward's son, the Black Prince, greatly distinguished himself; and the crest of the slain Bohemian king, composed of three ostrich feathers, with the motto, *Ich dien*, 'I serve,' being adopted by him in memory of the victory, still continues to be borne by the Prince of Wales.

A few days after the battle, Edward laid siege to Calais, which, being well walled and garrisoned, held out for the long period of twelve months; it was only rendered up after a heroic resistance, and when the inhabitants were reduced to the last extremity by famine. Edward's terms of capitulation led to a noble instance of self-devotion. He demanded that six of the principal burgesses should be surrendered to him bare-headed, bare-footed, with halters about their neck ready for execution, and bearing the keys of the town in their hands. The first who volunteered to be one of the victims was Eustace St Pierre, whose name has been immortalised in history; and, encouraged by his example, five others made up the required number. Coming

before Edward, he ordered the six men to be immediately put to death; but this act of cruelty, which for ever would have been a stain on his character, was fortunately averted by the merciful intercession of his queen, Philippa. Calais was now taken possession of by the English, who occupied it for the space of 211 years.

The sufferings caused in France by the war were not less deplorable than the wicked and angry passions, as well as the lasting resentments, which were evoked. To aggravate the national calamities, a pestilence of Oriental origin broke forth, called the Black Death, which, from 1348 to 1351, caused a frightful mortality in every country in Europe. The total number of human beings who perished by this extraordinary plague is stated to have been 25,000,000. In the general panic, a popular belief prevailed that the pestilence was owing to the public wells being poisoned by the Jews. The result of the calumny was a cruel and wholly unjustifiable persecution of the Hebrew race, whose extermination everywhere added greatly to the general suffering and loss of life.

Despite this calamitous visitation, Edward III. prosecuted the war in France. His son, the Black Prince, was despatched with a small army to Bordeaux, in order to lay waste the country of the enemy. King John II., who had succeeded to the throne of France, considering this a favourable opportunity for attack, brought up his forces; and now was fought the battle of Poitiers, 13th September 1356, when again the English were victorious. John was taken prisoner, and being conducted to England, was led on horseback in a triumphal procession by the Black Prince into London. The government of France meanwhile devolved on John's eldest son,

Charles (afterwards Charles V.), who, in consequence of the province of Dauphiné having been assigned in heritage to the eldest sons of the reigning monarch, was styled the Dauphin.

At this dismal period, important services were rendered to the Dauphin by an eminent French general, of whom history records many acts of great valour—Bertrand du Guesclin, belonging to an ancient family in Brittany. He gained numerous battles, and was ultimately created Count of Longueville and Constable of France. His memory is fondly perpetuated as one of the notables of his country in the fourteenth century. He died 1380.

In the course of the war in which Du Guesclin was concerned under the Dauphin, there broke out, in the year 1358, an insurrection of the peasantry of the most terrible description. Outraged by feudal oppressions and positive starvation, and in a state of ungovernable fury, they laid hundreds of castles in ruins, and practised every kind of enormity. The bands of insurgents receive in history the name of the *Jacquerie*, from the term Jacque, contemptuously given in France to an illiterate peasant. Their outbreak, which bore a resemblance to that of the rebellion of Wat Tyler in England some years later (1381), was at length quelled with immense slaughter.

In 1359, Edward III. renewed the war in France, and encountering some reverses, he made a treaty of peace, relinquishing his claim on the throne, but retaining a great part of the south of France in full sovereignty, and surrendering the captive king for a heavy ransom. On the death of John II. in 1364, he was succeeded by his son, Charles V., surnamed the Wise, and by his prudent

management and the valour of Du Guesclin, a great part of the territory yielded to the English was recovered. Charles died in 1380, and his son, as Charles VI., became king. The condition of France was at this time, and shortly afterwards, most miserable. From the contests of the Burgundians and the followers of Bertrand, Earl of Armagnac, about 1410, there was for a time a state of anarchy, mutual slaughter, and rapine—for some of which the English were responsible. The peace that had been effected with Edward III. was illusory. By Henry V. the war was renewed on the old claim of sovereignty. An English army landing in France at a time when the country was distracted by internal convulsions, the battle of Agincourt was fought, 25th October 1415. The English were again the victors; the result being insurrections in Paris and elsewhere, rivalling in atrocity those of the Jacquerie of 1358. In the course of these horrors, Henry took possession of the country, 1419. Death carried him off in 1422, and in the same year Charles VI. died. Here was a fresh cause of confusion. The son of the English king, an infant, was proclaimed king of France under the title of Henry VI., in disregard of the son of Charles VI., a youth twenty years of age, who retired to a petty provincial possession.

Aided by the powerful House of Burgundy, which found cause for resentment towards the kings of France, the rule of the English, with the Duke of Bedford as regent, was now paramount. The wish of Edward III. was at length realised. France was a dependency of England, in civil as well as ecclesiastical matters. Near to Paris, the Bishop of Winchester was installed in a palace, which, from *Bi*, the first part of the word bishop,

and *être*, the contraction of the last part of Winchester, came to be called the Bicêtre, a name which is still attached to the buildings in this locality.

The unrighteous domination of a foreign power was not destined to be enduring, and, strange to say, it was overthrown through the marvellously patriotic and pious ardour of an untaught rustic maiden, Jeanne d'Arc, or, as she is called in English, Joan of Arc. Under the inspiration of what she described as 'visions,' she, with fervid eloquence, stimulated a spirit of popular defiance against the English intruders, and at length enlisted military leaders in the cause. An army was gathered together, which attacked and captured Orleans, 7th May 1429, the gallantry of Joan on the occasion procuring for her the title of *Pucelle d'Orléans* (Maid of Orleans), by which she is still remembered in France. Other successes followed. Charles was crowned king of France at Rheims. The English, who were at first panic-stricken, at length mustered in strength to extinguish the revolt. At an encounter at Compiègne, Joan was taken prisoner, and, after a cruel captivity, she was tried by the English authorities for the alleged, and as we now know it to be, impossible, crime of witchcraft; yet absurd as was the accusation, she was found guilty, and burned at the stake at Rouen, 30th May 1431. Thus perished a poor girl, a simple enthusiast, who, on the best historical evidence, had the merit of arousing among the French that patriotic ardour which ultimately secured the independence of their country.

Two things materially contributed to this result. While England began to complain of the financial exhaustion caused by the prolonged French wars, from which no benefit was likely to ensue, the king of France was

successful in introducing the use of archery along with the employment of a species of standing army to supersede a reliance on the capricious feudatories of the crown. It has been stated that fire-arms were for the first time used by the English at the battle of Cressy in 1346; but it is certain that Edward III. employed some instruments of this kind as early as 1327, in his war against the Scotch, and that cannons were used by him at the siege of Cambrai, in 1339. To him, however, cannot be assigned the merit of a discoverer. In Spain, both Moors and Christians used artillery as early as the twelfth century; and the Arabs, deriving their knowledge of gunpowder from the Oriental nations, used some kind of fire-arms several centuries earlier.

Shortly after the tragical death of the Maid of Orleans, the English experienced disheartening reverses in their French campaigns. In battle after battle, great heroism was shewn by the gallant Sir John Talbot, who did his utmost to sustain the sinking cause of Henry VI., for which, and other services, he was in 1442 created Earl of Shrewsbury. His opponent, not less noted for his military skill, was the brave Dunois, usually styled the Bastard of Orleans. The final encounter took place at Châtillon, near Bordeaux, when Talbot, in the eightieth year of his age, was mortally wounded, and the English cause was lost. The date of this event was 20th July 1453. The claims of the English sovereigns were formally abandoned, and all their possessions in France were given up, except Calais. When relinquishing Normandy, England retained the isles belonging to it, now known as the Channel Islands, and which, though pertaining to Great Britain, still have in use the laws established by their old Norman possessors. Thus

ended the great French war, about the time when it could no longer be prosecuted; for in 1455 began in England the Wars of the Roses, between the rival Houses of York and Lancaster, during which, after a hundred and fourteen years of harassing intermittent hostilities, France was left in peace to pursue the work of internal organisation.

It is melancholy to consider what wrongs were inflicted on France by the long war which Edward III. had, in defiance of every legal right, begun in 1339; for it could be shewn that the protracted struggle of the French against English aggression did much to retard the social progress of the country. As if to add a sentiment of traditional bitterness to the injuries which France had been made to endure, Edward styled himself *King of France*, as well as of England; and this empty title, often remonstrated against, was continued through successive dynasties, till it was abandoned by George III. at the close of the eighteenth century.

## CHAPTER V.

### LOUIS XI. TO DEATH OF FRANCIS I.—1461-1547.

THE few years which Charles VII. lived after getting rid of the English were devoted to the restoration of public order, and increasing the power of the government by, as far as possible, limiting the encroachments of the great feudatories. In carrying out these objects his rule was despotic but mild, and under it France recovered in some measure from the effects of the terrible calamities it had endured. His last years were embittered by the conduct of his eldest son, Louis, who from boyhood was eminently selfish, cruel, tyrannical, and perfidious. Having made several attempts to murder his father and seize the throne, he was compelled to flee for protection to the court of Philip, Duke of Burgundy, where he remained till his father's death in 1461, when he succeeded to the crown as Louis XI.

History presents few such instances of selfishness, cruelty, and unprincipled dissimulation as that offered in the case of Louis XI. of France, whose mean personal appearance and physiognomy corresponded so remarkably with his despicable moral qualities as to render him a favourite character for the dramatist and novelist. Among his eccentricities was included a singular degree of superstitious bigotry, which led him to decorate his

cap with small figures of saints, to whom he prayed and made vows for the success of his schemes, however wicked they might be. Yet, if we are to believe the accounts of him, Louis XI. was not without some points to be admired. He had at heart the welfare of France, improved the roads and canals, founded universities, established several printing-presses, and was a patron of learning. It was only unfortunate that he trusted more to craftiness than honesty, and never scrupled to commit any atrocity to attain his object.

The odious process of parcelling out a kingdom among dukes and counts, who affected sovereignty within their petty dominions, had at length become so dangerous to the monarchy, that some bold measure was necessary for its extirpation. King after king had tried to modify the evil, and a few provinces had been annexed to the possessions of the crown; but much more remained to be done. Louis XI. began operations by strengthening the standing army which had been set on foot by his father; and thus fortifying his power, proceeded to adopt severe measures against the great feudal lords, who, in apprehension of general ruin, formed a league, which they called the League of the Public Good, though it might, with greater propriety, have been styled the league to perpetuate strife and disorder. The league comprehended the dukes of Burgundy, Brittany, Alençon, Bourbon, and De Berri (brother of the king); the counts Dunois, Foix, and Armagnac, and various other barons. The Duke of Burgundy's son and successor, Charles the Bold, was appointed leader. This formidable combination of princes and nobles with their retainers, met the royal forces at Montlhéry, 27th July 1465. The battle, however, was indecisive, and Louis, instead of renewing

it, resorted to the crafty and perfidious policy of appeasing discontents in detail, and by throwing the leaguers off their guard, contrived finally to gain the mastery.

His greatest difficulty was with Charles of Burgundy, who had succeeded to this magnificent dukedom, composing a section of the east of France, with Dijon as its capital. Although Paris had now been extended to both sides of the Seine, and possessed palaces worthy of being a royal residence, Louis preferred to reside at his castle of Plessis, a capacious fortified stronghold, pleasantly situated on a tongue of land formed by the junction of the Cher with the Loire, and, from its vicinity to Tours, usually called Plessis les Tours. Here, protected by his Scots guard, he conceived many of his crooked plans, especially that of overreaching the bold and irritable Charles of Burgundy, the main particulars of which, drawn from the Memoirs of Philippe de Comines, the historian of the period, have been fairly narrated in the popular tale of *Quentin Durward.*

Trusting to his powers of dissimulation, Louis invited Charles to a personal conference at Péronne, at a time when, through a number of mean agents, he had stirred up a revolt in the duke's possessions in Flanders. This memorable interview took place in October 1468, when, becoming aware of the king's perfidy, the duke made him a prisoner, and treated him roughly. Recovering his liberty by some concessions, Louis imagined that his secrets had been betrayed by his confidential adviser, Cardinal Ballue, and in his vengeance he caused this unfortunate ecclesiastic to be immured in an iron cage in the castle of Loches, in which a person of ordinary stature could neither stand up nor lie down at his full length. In this horrible cage, Cardinal Ballue was

confined for eleven years, being only liberated during the last illness of the king. The iron cages of Loches were destroyed in 1789, but the dreary dungeons which had been used as living graves for state prisoners before and after the reign of Louis XI., still exist, and may be seen by tourists.

By cunning, temporising, and bribery with money and promises, Louis contrived to outwit his enemies, including the English, who, by the Duke of Burgundy in the reign of Edward IV., were inveigled to make an invasion of France. The impetuosity of the duke led to his ruin and premature death. Levying war against the Swiss, he was defeated with great slaughter in two battles—the first at Grandson, in March 1476, and the second at Morat, 22d June in the same year. The bones of the Burgundian host being collected into a heap after the battle, remained as a memorial of the triumph of liberty over attempted oppression for the space of three hundred years. To these sad trophies Byron alludes in his *Childe Harold:*

> 'There is a spot should not be passed in vain—
> Morat! the proud, the patriot field! where man
> May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
> Nor blush for those who conquered on that plain;
> Here Burgundy bequeathed his tombless host,
> A bony heap through ages to remain,
> Themselves their monument.'

Since these lines were written, the bones have been collected and buried. In Charles's attempt to secure Lorraine, he fought the battle of Nancy, where he was defeated and slain, 5th January 1477. His daughter and heiress was married to Maximilian, emperor of Germany. With his life ended the long successful

resistance of a number of the great French vassals to the central authority of the monarchy; Burgundy and some other provinces being merged in the crown, or only retaining a titular distinction.

For reasons which could not well be justified, Pope Paul II., in 1469, granted to Louis XI. the title of 'Most Christian Majesty,' which became hereditary in his successors, whom it was also the custom to style 'The Eldest Son of the Church'—a phrase implying that the royal House of France was the oldest Christian monarchy. Louis XI. might be congratulated on this distinction, and on the success of his multifarious schemes; but all did not save him from the remorse which, by a just retribution, attends on a course of wrong-doing. Oppressed by recollection of his cruelties, afraid to die, and apprehensive of assassination, he immured himself in an apartment in the castle of Plessis, where his miserable existence closed on the 30th August 1483.

Louis XI. was succeeded by his son, Charles VIII., one of whose first public acts was to call together the States-general, which had met only once during the reign of Louis XI. The assemblage took place at Tours in 1484. Each of the three orders—clergy, nobles, and tiers-état—had its complaints of grievances to be redressed, but all were of a frivolous nature in comparison to those of the tiers-état, or commoners, which gave a frightful picture of the state of the country, and the sufferings of the peasantry from military oppression and taxation. 'During the last thirty-four years,' proceeded this recapitulation of grievances, 'the king's troops have been continually passing and repassing through France, and all in turns, of whatever description—gendarmerie,

archers, halberdiers, or pikemen—living on the poor people. Though employed to prevent oppression, they are themselves the worst of all oppressors. The poor peasant must pay for the man who beats him, who turns him out of his house, who carries off his substance, and who compels him to lie on the bare earth. When the poor man has with extreme difficulty, and by the sale of the coat on his back, managed to pay his *taille*, and is comforting himself with the hope that he may live out the year on the little he has left, then comes a new troop of soldiers eating and destroying that little; and not satisfied with what they find in the poor man's cottage, compelling him with heavy blows to seek in the town for wine, white bread, fish, groceries, and other luxuries; so that, if God did not comfort the poor man, he would fall into utter despair. In Normandy, a great and countless multitude have died of hunger; others, in despair, have killed their wives, their children, and themselves. From the want of beasts of labour, men, women, and children are compelled to yoke themselves to carts; and others, fearing that if seen in the daytime they will be seized for not having paid their taille, are compelled to labour during the night. All which things being considered, it seemeth to the States-general that the king ought to have pity on his poor people, and ought to relieve them from the said tailles and charges.' This wail of distress was disregarded.

Charles, who was at this time a youth, feeble in body and mind, could not grapple with the disordered state of affairs. He married Anne, Duchess of Brittany, by whom he had no surviving children to succeed him at his death in 1498. His successor was his cousin, Louis XII., who having been married by compulsion to Jane,

daughter of Louis XI., the union was legally dissolved. Louis now married Anne of Brittany, widow of Charles VIII., and by her had two daughters. Claude, the elder of these princesses, was married to Francis, Count of Angoulême, who was presumptive heir to the crown in virtue of his descent from the second son of Charles V. Anne died in January 1514, whereupon Louis, now advanced in life, made a second and ill-assorted marriage with Mary, sister of Henry VIII., a girl sixteen years of age. He lived only three months after the marriage, and at his decease without direct heirs in 1515, Francis, Count of Angoulême, as nearest heir of line, ascended the throne, under the title of Francis I. Claude, the wife of Francis, having inherited Brittany from her mother, gifted that dukedom to her husband, and he munificently suppressed the fief, and merged it inalienably in the crown (1532). Thus was another of the old provincial governments happily extinguished.

The reigns of Charles VIII. and Louis XII. are remarkable for French interference in the affairs of Italy. A descendant of the Anjou family having bequeathed Naples to Charles VIII., he invaded Italy, and fought his way to Naples, whence he drove the reigning monarch. A combination of princes, including the pope, the emperor, and the king of Spain, was formed against him, and he was forced to return to France. This union has been regarded by historians as the first instance of the balance of power in Europe. The claim on Naples was revived by Louis XII., who, besides, claimed Milan as a descendant of the Visconti family—a claim which was repeated by his kinsman, Francis I.

Handsome in person, and of accomplished manners, Francis I.—or *François Premier*, as he is named by the

French—was also chivalrous in his ideas, and went to battle with all the gaiety that he would have shewn at a tournament. He 'won his spurs' immediately on ascending the throne. Setting out to reconquer Milan, which had been wrested from his predecessor, he crossed the Alps with an army, among whom was the Chevalier Bayard, renowned as the knight *sans peur et sans reproche.* By the ability of this eminent commander, Francis gained a victory over the Milanese and their Swiss allies, at the battle of Marignano, 13th September 1515; and in accordance with his chivalrous propensities, as well as elated with success, he accepted from Bayard on the field the honour of knighthood. The Swiss, who, from their victories over the Duke of Burgundy, had become audacious and troublesome, were a foe less to be feared than one who now comes on the stage—the Emperor of Germany.

Maximilian, by his marriage with the daughter of Charles, Duke of Burgundy, acquired the Netherlands, which by marriage and purchase had come into the Burgundian family in the fourteenth century. Philip, the son of Maximilian, made a still more important alliance. He married Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain; and his son Charles became heir, not only to the Netherlands, but to the kingdom of Spain and the Two Sicilies. On the death of Ferdinand, his grandfather, in 1516, he was installed as king of Spain; and afterwards succeeded to all the possessions of his other grandfather, Maximilian, at the death of that monarch, 1519. Raised to this high pitch of power, he was desirous of being elected Emperor of Germany, a distinction for which he had to contend with Francis I. Charles being the successful candidate, assumed the

title of Charles V., by which he is best known in history.

So greatly was the ire of Francis roused by his mortifying defeat, that he immediately prepared for war, and endeavoured to secure the friendly assistance of Henry VIII. In one point of view, it was ridiculous for the French king to feel offended at the success of his rival; but allowances must be made for his irritation. The possessions of Charles environed France on three sides, and were deemed a source of national danger; and we are not without instances in recent times of the extreme susceptibility of the French, when labouring under apprehensions of this nature. The appeal of France to Henry VIII. led to an interview, in 1520, between the two monarchs, at a spot near Calais, which, from the splendour of the two courts on the occasion, has been called the 'Field of the Cloth of Gold.'

The interview, with various sports and ceremonies, lasted eighteen days, but led to no practical result, not even to international amity. Shortly afterwards, Henry formed an alliance with Charles V. and the pope against Francis. Wars ensued, in which Bayard was slain, 1524, and Francis suffered humiliating reverses. At the battle of Pavia, 24th February 1525, he was taken prisoner, and carried by Charles as a captive to Madrid —the world witnessing for the first time the sorrowful spectacle of a French sovereign, and one of no mean importance, rendering himself a prisoner of war to an emperor of Germany. It was on the occurrence of this humiliating defeat that Francis I. wrote a letter to his mother, in which he used the oft-quoted words: 'All is lost but honour.'

The captive king was restored to liberty in 1526, but

on conditions which Francis faithlessly, and on various pretexts broke, and there were fresh hostilities, chiefly concerning Lombardy, the right to which was long a fertile source of embroilment between France and the House of Austria.

Though neither sagacious, nor free from many faults of character, Francis I. helped to advance the interests of his country. He had an ardent love of literature and the fine arts, of which he was a munificent patron. At the time he flourished—the early part of the sixteenth century—western Europe was awakening from the torpor of the middle ages. Already, in the Italian republics, great progress had been made in literature, painting, and architecture. From Italy, Francis invited the most eminent artists to his court, under whom sprung up in France that revived style of art formed on classic models, known as the *Renaissance*, of which, as regards architecture, there were produced some fine examples in palaces, churches, and other public buildings, now admired for their beauty of design. The Louvre, a tasteful palatial structure overlooking the Seine at Paris (now transformed into a museum), was one of the buildings with which he embellished the capital. It was erected on the site of an old castle, which is occasionally mentioned in history. François Premier is accordingly looked back to as one of the notables of a past age in France; the very fashion of dressing his hair and his beard being still occasionally a thing for popular imitation.

The darkest stain on the character of Francis I. was his cruelty. Alarmed at the spread of the Reformation in Germany and England, he made every effort to arrest the movement in France. In 1535, at a fête in Paris,

amidst assembled multitudes, he proclaimed his intention to extirpate heresy, a sentiment hailed with the admiring shouts of the populace. As an evidence of his sincerity, six unfortunate individuals, professors of the Reformed doctrines, were suspended from a machine, which, by a peculiar contrivance, lowered each, for a few minutes successively, into a blazing furnace, until, by this slow and horrid torture, their quivering bodies were reduced to a charred cinder. Fatal lesson in cruelty, which was not lost on a people who, at various times, afterwards manifested an irresistible pleasure in the spectacle of human suffering!

The cruelties of Francis I. were shewn on a comprehensive scale in his infamous crusades, in 1541, against the Vaudois or Waldenses, a Christian community residing in the valleys of Piedmont, on the southern slopes of the Alps. The Waldenses, who originated in the preaching of Peter Waldo in the twelfth century, maintained, among other tenets, the right to a free reading of the Scriptures. Inoffensive in their conduct, the members of this body became the objects of cruel maltreatment. Under the orders of Francis I., they were massacred in great numbers. The persecution, however, failed to extirpate them, and as a religious community, they still exist in their Alpine homes, under the shelter of modern institutions. In the reign of Francis I., the period had fully arrived for introducing into France that species of parliamentary legislation which was gaining a constitutional form in England under the Tudors; but the opportunity was neglected; and the time which should have been employed in effecting social changes of this nature, was spent in contests with feudal vassals, in the ignoble work of

religious persecution, and in wars which were wasteful of national resources. Nor should we omit to state that the frivolities and profligacies of the court of François Premier, had that injurious effect on public morals which served to perpetuate the rule of a centralised despotism.

The wars in which Charles VII. had been engaged in his recovery of France from the English, led to the levying of certain taxes, one of which, the taille, as has been seen, pressed heavily on the rural population. Instead of lessening, Francis I. increased the taxes. An impost, which was perhaps more cruel than the taille, was the *gabelle*, a tax on salt, the collection of which was intrusted to officials called *gabeleurs*, whose rigorous operations led to frequent popular outbreaks. It would appear that the imposing of these burdens pressed more on the conscience of Francis I. in his dying moments, than his cruelties towards the Vaudois and others who had ventured to differ from him in religious belief. He died 31st March 1547; his last counsel to his son, Henry, being to lighten the burden of the taxes, and to beware of the ambitious family of Guise.

## CHAPTER VI.

### HENRY II.—FRANCIS II.—CHARLES IX.—HENRY III.—1547–1589.

THE period of forty-two years, to which we have now to call attention, is painfully memorable for those revolting, and, in a political sense, disastrous persecutions on account of religion, which, having begun in the reign of Francis I., culminated in the massacres of St Bartholomew, and the regal assassinations of Blois. To understand rightly the course of events signalised by these horrors, a few explanations seem desirable.

From the fourth century, when Gaul was occupied by the Romans, there had grown up in France a great ecclesiastical hierarchy in connection with the Church of Rome, which, expanding in dimensions, and enriched by endowments, had become the most firmly fixed institution in the country. In virtue of a concordat between Francis I. and Pope Leo X., the appointment to benefices and some other privileges had been conceded to the crown, and the Gallican church was accordingly shorn of some of its original and independent action. But, taken under the protection of the state, it suffered nothing in things spiritual. Dynasties came and went; laws and fashions altered; but the

church, with its Latin and ceremonious ritual, its legends of saints and martyrs, its ramification of archbishops, bishops, and clergy of lower degree, and its varied monastic establishments, remained intact—the only human organisation on which a thousand passing years made no visible impression. There could not fail to be a degree of national pride in owning a thing so ancient as to have entitled the king to be addressed as 'The Eldest Son of the Church'—the church which had been the mother and the protector of civilisation; the only friend of humanity in ages of barbaric passion.

A fabric so venerated by tradition—so consolidated as to seem as enduring as the great works of nature—was now destined to be assailed in a manner which was thought to be not only unwarrantable but blasphemous. The Albigensian heresy had been ostensibly stamped out, leaving, however, sentiments which kindled up in many parts of France in connection with the preaching of the Swiss, German, and English Reformers in the early part of the sixteenth century. In the reign of Francis I., the Reformed views, which amounted to a protest against certain doctrines and ritualistic observances of the Gallican church, had greatly spread, and been accepted by persons of learning and in authority. Alarmed for what might ensue, and violent in his policy, Francis, as has been seen, became a cruel persecutor of the Waldenses. John Calvin (or Cauvin), a native of Picardy, who had studied the Scriptures, and adopted the Reformed doctrines, having in 1533 proceeded to Paris, which had become a centre of the 'new learning,' excited the hostility of the king, and he and others labouring in the work of the Reformation had to flee for their lives. Considering that these proceedings occurred

at the very time when Henry VIII. was re-constituting the church on a Reformed footing in England, and that the persecution initiated by Francis was substantially equivalent to the repression of free and enlightened inquiry and the exercise of piety, we may date from this time the parting of France and England on two different paths—France laggingly advancing in its ancient track, carrying the seeds of a destructive political convulsion; England going manfully on in a course towards the full blaze of civil and religious liberty.

The son of Francis I., who in 1547 ascended the throne under the title of Henry II., was told by his dying father to beware of the Guises. This was a family which, for two centuries, played an important part in the history of France and Europe, and while distinguished by great bravery and commanding talent, possessed aspirations that were considered to be dangerous to the throne. They nevertheless were zealous in support of the church, and took an active part in the business of persecution.

The Guises were a branch of the ducal House of Lorraine, which, although the dukedom was a fief of the German empire, had long stood in intimate relations with the court and nobility of France. The founder of the family was Claude, a younger son of René II., Duke of Lorraine, who being naturalised in France in 1505, rendered himself conspicuous in the wars of Francis I., and was created first Duke of Guise. He died in 1550, leaving five daughters and six sons. His eldest daughter, Mary, became the wife of James V. of Scotland, and mother of Mary Queen of Scots. The sons were all men of extraordinary energy and ambition, and their united influence was, for a number of years,

more than a match for that of the crown. Francis, second Duke of Guise, acquired, while still a young man, extraordinary renown as a military commander, by carrying out certain ambitious designs of France on a neighbouring territory, which we shall endeavour to explain.

As is well known, French statesmen have for many centuries cherished the idea that the natural boundary of France on the east is the Rhine, from its mouth to its source, and thence along the crest of the Alps to the Mediterranean. What this fanciful and inveterately maintained notion has cost France, will afterwards be matter of painful consideration. To begin the realisation of the idea, advantage was taken of the war which broke out between the Emperor Charles V. and his Protestant subjects in North Germany. Although the Protestants of France were persecuted to the death, Henry II., with furtively ambitious designs, offered to defend the Protestants of Germany against their own emperor; and entered into an alliance in 1551, with Maurice of Saxony and other princes, undertaking to send an army to their aid. As bases of his operations, it was agreed that he might take temporary military possession of Toul, Verdun, and Metz, three bishoprics, each with a portion of territory lying within the area of the duchy of Lorraine, but held as distinct fiefs of the German empire—such, in fact, being fragments of Lothair's kingdom, which fell to Germany, and had in no shape been incorporated with France. It was stipulated that, in occupying these places, the French were not to interfere with their old connection with the empire.

The confidence reposed in the French was grievously

abused. All the stipulations went for nothing. In 1552, French troops took possession of Toul and Verdun, also of Nancy, the capital of Lorraine, treating the duchy, generally, as a conquered country. Seeing this, Metz shut her gates and trusted to her fortifications. To procure an entrance and secure possession there was a resort to stratagems, which afford a startling illustration of the tricks that French nobles at that time could be guilty of in order to gain their ends. The French commander, the Constable Montmorency, begged to be allowed to pass through the town with a few attendants, while his army made a wide circuit on its route. The too credulous custodiers of the city opened the gates, and, to their dismay, the whole French forces rushed in, and began to rule in true despotic fashion. Montmorency, finding himself opposed by a patriotic party among the magistrates, got the better of them by an act of almost unexampled treachery. Affecting to be very ill, he took to his bed, was dying, and invited those magistrates who were obnoxious to him to come to be witnesses to his will. Deceived by these false representations, they unfortunately attended the summons. When they presented themselves in a spirit of condolence at the bed-side of Montmorency, he suddenly sprung upon the senior magistrate, and stabbed him with a dagger to the heart, while the guard despatched the rest.

Thus was Metz secured for France in a way which modern Frenchmen, we should imagine, can hardly think of without shame. Germany, however, did not relinquish this important fortress without a struggle. Furious at its loss, the Emperor Charles V. proceeded to besiege it with a large army. The defence was undertaken by the Duke of Guise, assisted by a body of

French nobility. After an investment of four months, and a loss of 30,000 men, Charles was forced to raise the siege, January 1, 1553, all his attempts at the capture of the place being effectually baffled. Five years later, the Duke of Guise gained not less distinction by taking Calais from the English. This event took place January 7, 1558, in the last year of the reign of Mary of England, who felt the loss so acutely that it is said to have accelerated her death, which occurred 7th November of the same year. She is stated to have said: 'When I am dead, Calais will be found written on my heart.' The principal church in Calais was built during the occupancy of the English. In front of the Hôtel de Ville in the market-place, is placed, among other busts, that of Francis, Duke of Guise, the restorer of Calais to the French. By the capture of the town, the English were bereaved of the last relic of the Plantagenets in France.

The seizure of the city and bishopric of Metz, above mentioned, together with Toul and Verdun, was the first act of a series of aggressions made by France upon Germany, with the object of extending her frontier to the Rhine. They were renewed from time to time during two centuries, and, as will be afterwards described, resulted in the acquisition of Alsace and Lorraine. They naturally excited great interest at the time, and that interest has been recently and so mournfully revived as to suggest the reflection of retributive justice. The annals of France at this period are a chaos of details regarding wars carried on from the greed of conquest. Germany and Italy, on one pretence or other, were especially selected for attack. The object of Francis I. and his immediate successors was obviously to give France the preponderance in continental Europe. And

this they were able to accomplish by the consolidation and perpetuity of the monarchy. Against this gradually concentrating force, Germany could offer no proper opposition. The office of emperor was elective; and being competed for, there was for a long time a frequent shifting of the central authority from one dynasty to another, and a consequent rivalry and mutual distrust among the electors. In a word, the disintegration of Charlemagne's empire east of the Rhine, and the growth of a strong centralised power, by the suppression of rebellious feudatories on the western side of that river, along with the dismemberment of Italy into petty and easily subdued states, are the three simple facts, stripped of bewildering technicalities, which explain the rise of France to a degree of power which made it a menace, and sometimes a terror, to surrounding nations.

Satisfied for the time, and requiring temporary repose, France entered into a treaty of peace with Germany in 1559—the treaty of Château-Cambresis—by which, in return for ceding certain conquests, the possession of Metz, Toul, and Verdun was confirmed.

The successful seizure of these portions of Germany, and the capture of Calais, were the principal events in the reign of Henry II. By a fatality, which fell heavily on the country, he had, while dauphin, introduced at court the beautiful but dissolute Diana of Poitiers, to whose evil influence was conjoined that of his wife, Catharine de' Medici, daughter of Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino, a woman of strong will, crafty in her designs, unscrupulous, and bigoted. By the marriage there were four sons, Francis, Charles, Henry, and a younger who became Duke of Alençon, and three daughters, the eldest of

whom, Elisabeth, was married to Philip II., king of Spain; the second, Claude, was married to the Duke of Lorraine; and the youngest, Margaret, ordinarily styled Margaret of Valois, became the wife of Henry of Navarre. In 1548, Mary Queen of Scots, a girl six years old, was brought to the French court for protection and education; and it became a matter of state policy, in which Mary's uncle, the Duke of Guise, concurred, to have her married to Francis, the dauphin. Mary, in effect, was a puppet in the hands of the 'queen-mother' and the Guises. Previous to the marriage, she was induced to sign a secret treaty, which provided, that if there were no children from the union, Scotland should fall to the French monarchy. It was a treacherous arrangement, which, from circumstances, was fortunately of no avail. The marriage was celebrated with great rejoicings, 24th April 1558.

Charles V., emperor of Germany, the frequent antagonist of France, was now drawing to the close of his earthly career. In 1556, he retired to a monastery in Spain, in which he died, 21st September 1558. Henry II. survived the emperor only ten months. He died 10th July 1559, when the dauphin became king as Francis II., and Mary was hailed as Queen of France and Scotland. The king and queen were both young and inexperienced. The real ruler was Catharine the queen-mother, and her bigotry found scope in attempts to suppress the religious Reformers, whose teaching was now carried on openly, and making numerous converts throughout the country. It is stated, that immediately after their marriage, Francis and Mary, by way of shewing their sentiments, attended the execution of an advocate, who was charged with the crime of having

defended a person accused of heresy. The spread of the Reformed doctrines, despite severities of this kind, was much aided by a spirit of political discontent. The country was suffering from the impoverishing effects of the many wars in which the kings of France had been concerned, and offence had been taken at the extravagance and high-handed proceedings of the court. The air, in a sense, was full of disaffection. Political animosity was blended with religious dissension. To those who professed the Reformed doctrines was given the name Huguenots, for what reason has never been clearly defined; among them were many persons of high rank, especially Henry of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, and Admiral Coligny. On the other side were the Duke of Guise and his brother Charles, the cardinal, usually styled the Cardinal Lorraine.

In prosecuting what they deemed a sacred cause, the Huguenot leaders, unfortunately, committed acts which cannot be morally justified. They entered into a deliberate conspiracy to seize the person of the king at the castle of Amboise; and the plot being discovered, their reputation was materially damaged. In the course of the vengeful measures which followed the discovery, Francis II., who had never enjoyed good health, died 5th December 1560, when a new turn was given to affairs. The Guises were disappointed of seeing their niece continue as queen. Mary returned to Scotland to follow out her hapless fate.

By the death of Francis II., his next brother, a boy ten years of age, became king with the title of Charles IX., and the queen-mother was formally appointed regent. The persecution of the Huguenots was now carried on with renewed ferocity. Resistance followed,

from carrying out any designs against the public peace.

Confiding in these representations, Coligny, whom it was arranged to make the first victim, went about as usual. On the 22d August, as he was passing the church of St Germain l'Auxerrois (which faces the eastern front of the Louvre), he was struck by two balls shot from a window in the ground-floor of a building connected with the church; the assassin being a man who had lately been condemned to death, but spared for the purpose of murdering the admiral. The search made for him in and about the church was useless. He had escaped by a back-door of egress, and reaching a distant faubourg, was sheltered at a place prepared by Henry, Duke of Guise. One of the balls had taken effect in the shoulder, and the other had broken a finger. The incident caused much commotion. Coligny being carried to his hôtel, his wounds were dressed by the king's surgeon, the celebrated Ambroise Paré, to whom is due the merit of introducing the use of ligatures instead of cautery with a red-hot iron in the case of amputations. The ball having been successfully extracted, the admiral received the condolences of his friends, and was even visited by Charles IX., who affected the most acute sympathy with his misfortunes. On the pretext of guarding him from further outrage, but in reality to make sure of their victim, the royal conspirators placed a guard of fifty soldiers around the hôtel.

On the night of the 24th, the signal to commence the slaughter was to be given by the bell of the palace, but Catharine, in her impatience, ordered the bell of St Germain l'Auxerrois to be sounded; whereupon there was a rush of armed men upon all the Huguenots who

happened to be on the adjoining quays. Alarmed by the attack, many threw themselves into the Seine, and endeavoured by swimming to gain the opposite bank. Hurrying to the hôtel of Coligny, a band of assassins burst in the gates, and forced an entrance to the apartment of the aged and wounded admiral, who had beside him his pastor, Merlin, and some of his officials. To these Coligny addressed himself, bidding them save themselves, if possible, for they could not protect him, and he was ready to die. Some tried to escape by the roof, but all perished. By a wretch named Besmes, the admiral was slain by the thrust of a sword, and the others struck him with their lances. Henry, Duke of Guise—a man of a much meaner stamp than his father—took an active part in the atrocity. While the murder of the admiral was being perpetrated, he remained outside in the court-yard, and cried to Besmes if the work was finished; in reply, the body of the murdered Coligny was thrown out of the window, and met with some indignities. The general massacre was now at its height. Houses were everywhere broken open, and their inmates remorselessly killed. Charles IX., to shew his zeal, took part in the atrocity. Placing himself in a balcony of the Louvre, he kept firing on the terrified Huguenots, as if engaged in some pleasant kind of sport. There was some difficulty in dealing with his brother-in-law, Henry of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé. These being brought before him, were required either at once to attend mass in the chapel of the Louvre, or suffer death. To save their lives, both chose the first alternative, but were for some time afterwards kept under restriction.

Space does not allow us to pursue the narrative of

that terrible night of murder, pillage, and the basest treachery. Neither age nor sex saved the victims of Catharine's iniquitous plot. The very floors of the Louvre, to which nobles fled for refuge, were stained with blood. The massacre did not cease with the dawning light of the 25th. It lasted three days, during which upwards of four thousand victims were slaughtered in Paris. On the 28th, there was a solemn *Te Deum* at Notre Dame, at which the king assisted, to thank God for the great victory gained over the heretics. Orders went forth to carry on the work of extermination in the provinces, and in a short time fifty thousand persons perished. Some towns, by the courage and humanity of the magistrates, were happily preserved from outrage. Such was the Massacre of St Bartholomew, which has not been without apologists and attempted refutations. The facts which we have moderately stated, remain a terrible reproach on the authors of this great iniquity.

The massacre proved not less a crime than a blunder. While it failed to extirpate the Protestants, it led to feelings of shame and remorse on the part of many of the influential Roman Catholics. Charles was ill at ease, and his health was failing. Yet there was no relenting in his conduct. The inhabitants of Rochelle and Montauban shut their gates, and, successfully holding out against the forces that were sent to subdue them, were allowed to maintain their freedom of religious opinion unchallenged—a triumph causing much vexation to the court. Fresh sources of disquietude were in store. Henry, Duke of Anjou, was elected king of Poland in 1573, and a year later he was recalled to France by the death of his brother, Charles IX. This perfidious monster expired 30th May 1574. Leaving

no male issue, Henry, his brother, became king of France, with the title of Henry III.

Henry had shewn some good qualities as a military commander. As a king, he fell short of popular expectations, for he failed to carry on the persecution of the Huguenots with a zeal sufficient to please the Parisian populace, whose ferocity was stimulated by the factious designs of the Duke of Guise. This personage, from a scar in his face which he had received in a skirmish in 1574, was now commonly called *Le Balafré*. He was the restless mischief-maker of the period. Claiming to be a descendant of Charlemagne, he aspired to be monarch, by getting rid of Henry and his younger brother the Duke of Alençon, and setting aside the heir-presumptive, Henry of Navarre, on the ground of heresy. To effect this treasonous manœuvre, a League of some historic note was promoted. At the outset, the League was dexterously circumvented by the king, and by the States-general which met at Blois in December 1576. Afterwards the confederacy gained strength, and a civil war ensued, in which Henry of Navarre, at the head of a small Protestant force, achieved a victory over the Leaguers, 1587. Next year, there was an uprising in Paris to dethrone the king, on the score of being too lenient to heretics. Barricades were raised in the streets; the armed populace fought against the royal and Swiss guards, whom they finally vanquished, and put cruelly to death; the Louvre was assailed; and to save his life the king fled to Rouen. This extraordinary battle in the streets of Paris, the forerunner of many similar commotions, took place 12th May 1588.

Though now master of the situation, the Duke of Guise had not the fortitude to prosecute the rebellion,

and made overtures for a compromise. He suggested that he should be appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom; and that, to settle differences, a meeting of the States-general should be assembled. Henry agreeing to this arrangement, the scene shifts to Blois, a town picturesquely situated on the right bank of the Loire, with a royal castle, part of which, in the style of the Renaissance, had been built by Francis I. Here the States-general met on the 16th October 1588. The king was there with his council, and the Duke of Guise attended officially as grand-master of the household. In the breast of the king there was a resolution to kill the duke, who certainly merited death for his crimes, but not by the base method of assassination. The dissimulation which could clothe the most murderous intentions in outward politeness, was not more vividly exemplified by Louis XI. than it now was in the case of Henry III. in the castle of Blois. In that grand old edifice (which has been latterly devoted to the purposes of a military barrack) are still shewn the apartments in which the different circumstances in the regal tragedy were enacted. One room, called the king's cabinet, is pointed out where Henry III. distributed daggers to five-and-forty assassins with instructions to stab Le Balafré when, by invitation, he entered the apartment. On the 23d December, the duke, being summoned by a page to wait on the king, proceeded to the royal cabinet, and, while turning aside the tapestry which hung over the door of the ante-chamber, he was struck down by the blows of the assassins, and with forty wounds on his person immediately died on the floor.

There is often something dramatic in the outrages of the French. The body of the Duke of Guise was

suffered to lie on the spot where it fell for two days, with a cross of straw placed upon it, as if to give the murder a sort of religious sanction. And it is said that the king, in passing the corpse, kicked the face with his foot, uttering at the same time a coarse jest on its appearance. On the day after the murder, the king caused Louis, the Cardinal of Guise, brother of the duke, to be assassinated in another part of the palace. The bodies of both were burned, and their ashes scattered to the winds. In the midst of the confusion and strife of parties caused by these crimes, Catharine de' Medici, the queen-mother, died at Blois, unheeded and unlamented, 5th January 1589. A memorial of her superstition is still pointed out. It is a spot on the top of one of the towers of the castle, where, with astrologers, she consulted the stars concerning the probable success of her schemes of ambition, treachery, and bloodshed.

Henry III. did no good after the tragedies of Blois. The Duke of Mayenne, brother of the deceased Duke of Guise, put himself at the head of the League. The Parisians were frantic for revenge. In his extremity, the king entered into a treaty with Henry of Navarre to withstand the forces of the League, and at the head of a united body of Protestants and Catholics he marched towards Paris, with a view of investing it, and took up his residence at St Cloud, whence fate destined he should never remove. Besides a brother, the Duke of Guise left a sister, the Duchess of Montpensier, who secretly vowed vengeance against the king, and employed a monk named Clement to execute her diabolical purpose. Furnished with letters to the king, he visited St Cloud. Gaining access to the royal presence, he knelt

to present his credentials, and Henry, stooping to receive them, was stabbed with a poisoned knife in the lower part of the body. The assassin was immediately slain by the attendants; but by the public he was glorified as a saint and a martyr. The wound inflicted on the king was mortal. He died 2d August 1589; and as his younger brother had died previously (1584), the House of Valois was extinct.

The massacres and assassinations which disfigured the reign of the last three sovereigns of the House of Valois, and of which we have presented but an imperfect account, must be pronounced to have been altogether unique in horror and treachery. The assassinations take place in a connected series; the assassin, generally, being in his turn assassinated. Important services to the state do not stay the hand of the murderer. The Constable Montmorency stabs a poor confiding burgomaster, whose official associates are at the same time mercilessly slaughtered. Montmorency is, some years later, shot down like a dog. Francis, Duke of Guise, the deliverer of Calais, is assassinated by the pistol-shot of a fanatic. The Prince of Condé, on being taken a prisoner of war, is assassinated by a shot in the back of the head while he is helpless and getting his wounds dressed. Henry, Duke of Guise, assists at the murder of Coligny, and is himself assassinated by the daggers of Henry III., who takes the opportunity of also murdering the Duke's brother. It is Henry's turn next. He is assassinated by Clement, a monk, acting under the orders of the Duke of Guise's sister; and Clement, who is instantly slaughtered, is commemorated as one who has done God service.

## CHAPTER VII.

### HENRY IV.—1589-1610.

THE religious war which distracted France at the close of the life of Henry III., was continued after his death with a bitterness aggravated by views of an ambitious nature. There was a contest for the crown. In the desperate struggle there could be no doubt who had the rightful legal claim to the inheritance. It was Henry of Navarre, but in general estimation he was a heretic, and other, though imperfect, claims were put forward. The real issue in dispute was whether France should have a Roman Catholic or a Protestant king. As this was a turning-point in the history of the country, we may give some account of Henry, the central and conspicuous figure in the narrative.

Louis IX.—Saint Louis—as has been stated, had a younger son, Robert, Count of Clermont and Lord of Bourbon, the ancestor of the various branches of the Bourbons. In the early part of the sixteenth century, the main stem was represented by Anthony of Bourbon, Duke of Vendome. He had several brothers, one of whom was Charles, Cardinal Bourbon; another was Louis, Prince of Condé—he who was treacherously killed at the battle of Jarnac—the first of a series of nobles with the same title, and to which line belonged

the unfortunate Duke d'Enghien. Anthony of Bourbon was not remarkable either for wealth or steadiness of principle. He embraced the doctrines of the Reformers, but was quite willing to repudiate them, and actually did so, in the hope of being raised to the throne of France. He was not fated to reach this distinction. When in his Protestant mood, and far from affluent, he made a convenient marriage, 1548, with Jane d'Albret, daughter of Henry d'Albret, king of Navarre, and his wife, Margaret of Angoulême, sister of Francis I.—the whole a Protestant family, chiefly from the predilections of Margaret, one of the high-souled women of the age.

Navarre had at one time been a kingdom of some importance, but at this period it was shrunk to limited dimensions, in consequence of the greater part having been appropriated by Spain. All that was left of it was a small stretch of country on the north side of the Pyrenees. It was, however, still an independent sovereignty. By intermarriage with the counts of Foix, the Pyrenean province of Bearn, with Pau as its capital, was happily annexed to it, and, thus enlarged, Navarre (to which no Salic law applied) formed a dowry for Jane d'Albret, sufficient to attract the representative of the illustrious House of Bourbon. From her mother, Jane inherited a masculine intrepidity, and attachment to the Protestant faith. At her father's court in the castle of Nerac, she had conversed with Calvin, Beza, and other Reformers, who here at times found a refuge from persecution, and held learned disquisitions on points of theology. Margaret of Angoulême survived the marriage of her daughter only a year. At her death, Jane was left to do the honours of the court, and it was while doing so, and residing at Pau, that she gave birth

to a prince, Henry, 13th December 1553—the Henry of Navarre who had so narrowly escaped the massacre of St Bartholomew with his cousin the Prince of Condé, and who, at the extinction of the House of Valois, became competitor for the crown.

The birth was a great gratification to Henry d'Albret, the old king of Navarre. Historians mention that he made his daughter promise to sing a song to him while she was in labour, in order that by her courage she might have a child who would neither weep nor make wry faces; though, if such promise was exacted, the intention probably was, that Jane might have her mind diverted from herself at a trying moment. The promise is said to have been kept. The princess sang a song in her own Bearnois dialect, and the child came into the world without crying. The young prince was brought up with homely fare, and the rough exercises of a mountaineer, by which he acquired a robust constitution and manliness of bearing. On the death of Henry d'Albret, in 1555, his daughter became queen of Navarre, and the title of king was assumed by her husband, Anthony of Bourbon, who held it till his death in 1562. Queen Jane lived ten years longer, occasionally frequenting the court of France. She died in 1572, the year of the massacre, when young Henry of Navarre inherited the family honours.

Henry, as we have seen, was married the same year, to Margaret of Valois, youngest daughter of Henry II., who, recognising him as heir-presumptive to the crown, had indiscreetly brought about the match while the Prince of Navarre was a boy and could not properly answer for his feelings. It proved an unhappy union, and was ultimately dissolved on account of Margaret's

profligacy of character, though Henry's conduct was anything but blameless. Seldom has a claim to a throne been traced from so distant an ancestor as in the case of Henry of Navarre. His relationship to Henry III. was only in the twenty-first degree, and he was nine removes from Saint Louis. His marriage with a sister of the deceased king does not appear to have strengthened his claim. He stood upon his rights under the Salic law, which alike excluded Margaret and Claude, and their elder sister Elisabeth.

Henry's claim, however, was challenged by two powerful competitors, on the plea of setting aside a heretic, and each was supported by a faction. There ensued, therefore, a war of succession, in which three parties were concerned. The most formidable of Henry's antagonists was the League, headed by the Duke of Mayenne, who, pursuing his own visionary aspirations, attempted to place on the throne the aged Cardinal Bourbon. Now appeared on the scene—first on behalf of the League, and then for a selfish purpose of his own —Philip II. of Spain, whose forces were commanded by the Duke of Parma. Philip's right to interfere was as flimsy as that of the Guises. He had married Elisabeth, the elder daughter of Henry II., and, in defiance of the Salic law, he put her forward as rightful heir to the throne. Since the death of his father, the Emperor Charles V., Philip was the most powerful monarch in Europe, besides being the most able and unscrupulous. His religious bigotry knowing no bounds, he considered the present a favourable opportunity for extirpating the Huguenots root and branch in France, and at the same time advancing the interest of his own family.

Henry's adherents were principally the moderate

Catholics, along with the Huguenots. With this mixed but energetic force, he fought the famed battle of Ivry, 1590, and gained a complete victory, much to the joy of Rochelle and other strongholds of Protestantism. Lord Macaulay has made the victory over the forces of the League at Ivry the theme of an impassioned ode, which commences with the lines:

'Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories are!
And glory to our sovereign liege, King Henry of Navarre!
Now let there be the merry sound of music and of dance,
Through thy corn-fields green, and sunny vines, O pleasant land of France!
And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning daughters.
As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy,
For cold, and stiff, and still are they who wrought thy walls annoy.
Hurrah! hurrah! a single field hath turned the chance of war;
Hurrah! hurrah! for Ivry, and Henry of Navarre.'

After the battle of Ivry, Henry marched to and besieged Paris, which, being walled and resolute, suffered a protracted investment rather than capitulate. The only expectation of subduing it was by famine; the inhabitants, however, gave an example of that indomitable spirit of endurance for which they have been latterly distinguished. Such was their extremity, that they were reduced to the necessity of eating the most loathsome food, even the flesh of human beings. To relieve the pressure on their resources as far as possible, the besieged drove forth all that they considered 'useless mouths,' and Henry, with becoming humanity, allowed the poor people to pass. Paris was rewarded for its heroism. Henry was forced to raise the siege, in consequence of having to encounter the forces of the

Duke of Parma. He fought battles in various places, but his cause for a time seemed almost hopeless.

In the course of the struggle, the Cardinal Bourbon died; so did Elisabeth, but as she left a daughter whom Philip put forward in her stead, matters were not greatly mended. To bring the contest to a crisis, the Duke of Mayenne procured a meeting of the States-general, for the purpose of electing a king. The decision which this body came to was, that a Protestant was inadmissible, and that Philip's daughter had the best claim. From this decision there was an appeal to the Parliament of Paris, as supreme judicial tribunal, and its decree was, that the Salic law was part of the fundamental constitution of the kingdom, and could on no account be set aside. This was equivalent to pronouncing in favour of Henry, some of whose friends now perceived there was only one thing for him to do—to declare his adhesion to the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church.

In the conjuncture to which Henry of Navarre was now brought, he relied on the advice of his minister and friend, Maximilien Bethune, Baron de Rosny, who, under the title of Duke of Sully, has been rendered memorable by his Memoirs of this period in French history. The Bethunes were an old family in France, connected by intermarriage with some of the sovereign houses of Europe; and from a branch which proceeded to Scotland sprang Cardinal Bethune or Beaton, of unfortunate notoriety connected with the Reformation in that country. Maximilien de Bethune was born in 1560, and at an early age attached himself so closely to Henry of Navarre, that throughout life the two, by mutual regard, were inseparable. A community of

religious belief led to this degree of friendship. De Rosny was a Huguenot, and as such he lived and died. Although nothing would make him swerve from his adherence to the doctrines of the Reformers, he did not scruple to recommend Henry to sink his religious convictions, and to go over to the Roman Catholic Church, so as to become king, and thereby put an end to a desolating civil war. Henry hesitated, but agreed. He publicly abjured Protestantism; there was a general satisfaction, Spain only for a time holding out; and, under the title of Henry IV., he entered Paris amidst the rejoicings of the citizens, 22d March 1594.

The apostasy of Henry, at the sacrifice of cherished convictions, does not on moral grounds admit of extenuation. Probably, he appeased the upbraidings of conscience with the expectation that, besides stopping the civil war, he would, as king, possess opportunities of protecting the religious body which, for political reasons, he had at a critical moment somewhat ungraciously deserted. The war, unfortunately, was not stopped. It was carried on by the Spaniards, who, in 1596, captured Calais, and made themselves masters of several other places in Picardy. Henry's adhesion to the Roman Catholic Church was a shock to Queen Elizabeth, and to Protestants generally in England and Germany; for at this time the Reformation was still on its trial, and the loss of France was discouraging.

Henry did his best in the very awkward circumstances in which he had placed himself. On the 15th April 1598, he signed a memorable Edict at Nantes, which, with certain limitations, secured to Protestants liberty of conscience, and the administration of impartial justice. Among its more important provisions were:

Liberty to celebrate worship wherever Protestant communities already existed; all superior lords were privileged to hold meetings for public worship in their châteaux; every private gentleman might receive as many as thirty visitors at domestic worship; liberty was granted to establish new churches, except in Paris and the surrounding district, and in the royal residences; and to maintain universities or theological colleges, of which they had four—those at Montauban, Saumur, Montpellier, and Sédan; adherents of the Reformed faith were also to be eligible to all civil offices and dignities; they were to be allowed to hold Rochelle, and some other fortified places, as a security that their privileges would not be encroached upon; they were, however, not to print books on the tenets of their religion, except in those places where it existed; and they were obliged to outwardly celebrate the festivals of the Catholic church, and to pay tithes to the Catholic priesthood. This was certainly an imperfect act of toleration; but it was very acceptable to the Huguenots, who already counted 760 churches.

In the same year, by the treaty of Vervins, Henry IV. concluded a peace with Spain, which restored to France many places in Picardy, including Calais, which had been two years in possession of the Spaniards. He was now left at liberty to direct his attention to the internal improvements of the kingdom, which had been thoroughly disorganised through the long continuance of civil war. The narrow-minded policy that had been followed during the preceding reigns, had left the provinces, remote from the capital, very much at the mercy of the civic governors and large landed proprietors, who, in the absence of a general administrative vigilance,

arrogated almost sovereign power to themselves, raising taxes, and exacting compulsory services. These abuses he completely stopped; and by making canals and roads, and thus opening all parts of his kingdom to traffic and commerce, he established new sources of wealth and prosperity for all classes of his subjects.

In carrying out these and other reforms, Henry was greatly assisted by Baron de Rosny, who, though austere and haughty in manner, was resolute, active, indefatigable, and encountered with firmness the clamour and hatred of those who had largely profited by the former state of chaos. As regards Henry's private character, there were some unpleasant blemishes, the most conspicuous, perhaps, being his intimacy with the accomplished Gabrielle d'Estrées, who exerted an influence at court analogous to that which had been exercised by Diana of Poitiers in the reign of Henry II. The fair Gabrielle, however, had the tact to support De Rosny in his wise schemes of financial reform, and to silence the objections of the courtiers.

The measures promoted by Henry IV. and his minister afford, on a broad scale, the first glimpse of common sense in the conduct of public affairs in France. Armed with absolute authority, De Rosny made a tour through the country, everywhere examining accounts, rectifying abuses, dismissing or suspending delinquents, and largely replenishing the treasury with the ill-gotten wealth he compelled them to disgorge. By his enlightened views of finance, he raised the disposable revenue of the state three-fold, while the pressure of taxation was equalised; at the same time reducing the national debt from three hundred millions to fifty millions of livres. Under his management, France began to have a fleet and

arsenals; agriculture was improved; manufacturing industry was developed; and the condition of the peasantry, hitherto treated with indifference, was now considerably meliorated. These reforms provoked much ill-will and opposition, but De Rosny persevered in his patriotic course of national advancement.

The accession of Henry IV. opened a new era on Paris, which was now repaired and beautified after repeated sieges. The population at this time is said to have been about 230,000. Considerable additions were made to the royal residence. Catharine de' Medici had begun the palace of the Tuileries in 1564; but the work was prematurely abandoned, and it was continued by Henry IV. and his two immediate successors. Henry erected the gallery along the quay to connect the Tuileries with the Louvre, which long continued to be the official home of royalty, though not enlarged to its present extent. The *Pont Neuf*, the most famous of the old bridges across the Seine, was founded by Henry III. in 1578, and finished by Henry IV. in 1604. By Philippe Augustus, Paris, then a small city, was environed by walls with lofty towers for defence. Confined to the limited space within the walls, the houses were built closely together, and of a great height. At length, in the reign of Charles V., a new wall, including a wide space outside, was erected, with a strong fortified keep or Bastille on the east, which ultimately became a state prison. In the early part of the fifteenth century, Paris was held for seven years by an English garrison. Again there were extensions of the *enceinte*, or outer protecting wall; the old walls being at the same time removed, their level site formed in some places an open thoroughfare called a *boulevard*, from having been originally a bulwark.

The increase of Paris was not less due to the attractions of the court than to the influence of its university and the Sorbonne, which drew learned men and scholars from all the nations of Europe. Before the reign of Henry IV., the French language had attained to the precision, and nearly to the polish, which it now possesses; and though far from being so copious as the German or the English, it was employed with great success in the rising literature of the country. French literature issuing from the presses of Paris had acquired renown through the works of several noted authors; beginning with Froissart, a writer on feats of arms in the 14th century; Monstrelet, a writer on the same subject, and Masselin, a political annalist in the 15th century—followed in the 16th century by Rabelais, a keen satirist and humorist; Ronsard, a lyrical poet, who had accompanied Mary of Lorraine and her husband, James V., to Scotland, and to whom their ill-fated daughter, Mary Stuart, sent a gift from her prison, addressing him as 'Apollo, the source of the Muses;' Amyot, an esteemed translator of Greek classics; and Montaigne, celebrated for his masterly philosophic essays.

In Henry IV. were united the sovereignties of France and Navarre, and they so remained with his successors till the Revolution. Bearn was also incorporated with the crown. As the first king of the House of Bourbon, *Henri Quatre*, as the French call him, imparted a certain vigour to the monarchy, which had for some time been in the hands of schemers and imbeciles. Looking to the success of his administrative reforms, and to the pacification of religious discord by his Edict of Nantes, it seems matter for regret that, assisted by

the counsels of De Rosny, he did not go a step farther, and establish constitutional freedom. Had his life been spared, he might possibly have attempted a measure of that nature. For any apparent shortcoming in this respect, there were extenuations. The nobles were powerful and factious; the clergy jealous and bigoted; and the populace ignorant. Before establishing a free government, he would have required to reform the church; but for this he had not the power, nor had the people the will. Protestantism was barely tolerated, and at best precarious. It was embraced only by the more thoughtful and intelligent, and chiefly among an independent class of tradesmen, artisans, and residents in Bearn, Navarre, and some other places in the south. Even if allowed the fullest scope, it is doubtful if it would have greatly spread, unless the plain and unimpressive forms of public worship introduced by the French Reformers had been modified to meet the craving of the people for pictorial effect. Such an alteration might possibly, in time, have been effected.

The marriage of Henry with Margaret of Valois was the great misfortune of his life, and goes far to account for his domestic irregularities. At length, he got rid of this embarrassing yoke by a divorce in 1599. He now proposed to marry the fair Gabrielle, but this, for reasons of state, he suffered himself to be persuaded against by De Rosny, and soon after she died. In 1600, he espoused Mary de' Medici, niece of the Grand-duke of Tuscany.

This was not a particularly suitable marriage, but as there were several children, to whom Henry shewed much affection, all fears of a disputed succession were allayed. A story is told of his having on one occasion

been visited by a Spanish ambassador, when romping with his children in the private chamber of the queen; creeping on his hands and knees, his eldest son, Louis, was riding on his back, and his youngest child, Henrietta Maria, who was afterwards married to Charles I. of England, was joyously tottering by his side. Henry having asked his visitor if he was a father, and being assured that he was, continued the play. If there be any truth in the story, there is reason to think that Henry possessed qualities which ought to have insured him a better fate. In 1606, he created the Baron de Rosny a peer of France, and Duke of Sully.

Passing over a few uneventful years, in which Henry was making preparations to enter on a defensive war against Austria, we come to the tragical circumstance by which his useful life was abruptly terminated. A man named Ravaillac, labouring under the hallucination that Henry IV. was about to wage war against the pope, resolved to assassinate him. Providing himself with a double-edged knife, he eagerly watched for an opportunity to commit this atrocity. On the 14th May 1610, as the king was passing in his coach—a vehicle open at the sides—through a narrow street in Paris, Ravaillac got upon the right hinder wheel at the moment the carriage was hindered from advancing by a heavy wagon in front of it, and, leaning forward, he plunged his knife into the breast of the king. The first blow glanced aside, but at the second thrust the knife entered the heart. Death was instantaneous. The murderer escaped in the confusion, but being soon captured with the knife still in his hand, he admitted his guilt; and having been formally tried and condemned, he was put to the torture, and suffered death on 27th May in the Place de Grève,

under circumstances of great cruelty, his body being torn asunder by horses. From the fullest examination of particulars, the conclusion come to is, that the culprit had no accomplices, and the real cause of his crime was fanaticism, degenerated into monomania.

The murder of Henri Quatre caused profound grief to the Parisians, who commemorated him as the 'Great' and the 'Good.' Eulogies were pronounced on his merits, and statues were erected to his memory. Sully was inconsolable, and France felt that it had lost the best of kings. A song, *Vive Henri Quatre*, set to an air of which he is said to have been fond, is still conspicuous in the popular anthology of France.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### LOUIS XIII.—1610-1643.

AT the death of Henry IV. in 1610, his eldest son, a boy nine years of age, became king, with the style of Louis XIII.; and his mother, the queen-dowager, Mary de' Medici, became regent during his minority. Mary was a weak-minded woman, wholly without self-reliance; she ruled by the advice of parasites, and to gain their support bribed them with money, places about court, and appointments to the government of towns and fortresses. Soon all the money that by previous good management had accumulated in the treasury was dispersed, in a wholesale system of demoralisation. As proceedings of this kind would have been repugnant to Sully, he was civilly dismissed with a present of 300,000 livres, in acknowledgment of his services. Retiring from the court, he occupied himself in writing his Memoirs, and died at his château of Villebon, near Chartres, in 1641.

The queen's chief confidant and director was the wife of an Italian who had come with her to France, named Concini; and, influenced by her, she created Concini Marquis d'Ancre, and raised him to be Marshal of France. The native nobles were so enraged, that, to avoid an insurrection, and to adjust matters, Mary had her son

declared to be of age, and he, a boy only thirteen years old, was made to summon a meeting of the States-general. This body assembled at Paris in October 1614. Each of the three orders was loud in relating the grievances which ought to be redressed. The tiers-état, in particular, was bitter on the subject of court pensions, taxes, feudal oppressions, and the excessive power of the church. At this memorable assembly, there was heard for the first time the voice of a young ecclesiastic, Richelieu, bishop of Luçon, who shortly afterwards rose to the head of affairs. Some reforms founded on public complaint were projected, but they evaporated in declamation. Such were the dissensions between the different orders, that the assembly was hurriedly dissolved, after having sat four months.

The States-general, which was dissolved on the 23d February 1615, did not again meet for the space of a hundred and seventy-four years, during which affairs were conducted in an arbitrary manner by the king and his council of state. To avoid the necessity of calling together the States-general, the sovereigns of the House of Valois introduced the expedient of calling in their stead, Assemblies of the Notables, consisting of princes of the blood, and certain peers, archbishops, councillors of state, marshals, and judges—the time of calling, and the composition of such assemblies, being entirely dependent on the pleasure of the crown, by which also their whole proceedings were guided, so that they generally consented to whatever was proposed to them. Called together in 1626, no other Assembly of the Notables took place until 1787.

As if to give a colour of constitutional forms, the French kings were under a real or supposed obligation to get

their ordinances imposing taxes registered by the Parliament of Paris. In general, the obligation was illusory. When the Parliament refused their assent to register, the king could attend in person and command the registration to be made. On such occasions he sat in a canopied chair, and was said to hold a bed of justice (*lit de justice*). There were instances of kings not taking this trouble, but of tyrannically banishing and overawing the Parliament; while, on the other hand, in the case of a weak or unpopular monarch, the Parliament assumed a domineering authority.

The Parliament of Paris was neither a representative nor a legislative body. The nearest idea to be obtained of its character is, that it was an anomalous union of a Star Chamber, a bench of magistrates, and a supreme court of justice. It also claimed the position of father or guardian of the state, with a right to interfere in particular emergencies for the welfare of the community. The members, some of whom were priests, nobles, and lawyers, were variously appointed. Latterly, they bought their places for life; and an English historian (Alison) extols this as preferable on the score of independence.

By way of settling foreign as well as other differences, Louis was married to Anna Maria, usually styled Anne of Austria, eldest daughter of Philip III., king of Spain; Anna Maria and Louis renouncing all claim for themselves or descendants on the Spanish crown. The marriage took place 1615. At the same time, Louis's sister Elizabeth was affianced to Philip's son. Meanwhile, there arose a League among the nobility to oppose the court. At the head of it was Henry, Prince of Condé (grandson of the Condé killed at Jarnac). He had

begun life as a Huguenot, but was now a zealous Catholic, and presumed on the circumstance of being nearest relative to the king. There was for a time a petty rebellion, one of the objects of which was to get rid of Concini. The end was gained in a manner not unusual in these times. The king, to whom he had made himself hateful by his overbearing assumption, was persuaded to have him arrested. On Concini entering the Louvre, his arrestment in the name of the king was announced to him; at the same moment a band of nobles fell upon him with pistols and swords, and laid him dead on the pavement (1617). Not to do things by halves, Concini's wife was accused of having obtained control over the mind of Mary de' Medici by means of magical incantations, and being found guilty, was first beheaded, and then burned to ashes as a sorceress.

The assassination of Concini, and the judicial murder of his wife, did not settle matters. For two years there was a confused civil war, in which nobles, Huguenots, Condé, and a court favourite, named De Luynes, were engaged. In these dissensions, there was a general concurrence in trying to root out the Huguenots. Unfortunately, these were not blameless. In maintaining their religious immunities, they kept up fortresses, employed soldiers, called together political assemblies; and, proclaiming republican doctrines, assumed an attitude which was considered dangerous to the state. Their leader was the Duke de Rohan, son-in-law of Sully, a brave and sagacious general, who had the ability to defeat the royal forces at the siege of Montauban (1622), when, De Luynes being killed, there was for the present an end of the matter.

Louis XIII. inherited good abilities, but he was fond

of ease, and unable to govern without the aid of a strong-minded minister. By a happy accident, such a minister was found in Richelieu, who had been created a cardinal in 1622, and was installed as minister of state in 1624. Richelieu, whom we now introduce, was one of the great men of the seventeenth century—learned, resolute, wily, of comprehensive genius, unscrupulous, but not without magnanimity. The French admire dash, and worship success. Richelieu commanded admiration by concluding, in 1624, a marriage between Henrietta Maria, sister of the king, and the Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles I. He was successful in checking Austria by a rapid military movement. Against all expectation, he reduced Rochelle, after a siege of thirteen months, 1628; but only when the inhabitants were forced to yield by famine. The English attempted to send them succour, but their ships were prevented from landing stores, by a mole which Richelieu caused to be built across the harbour. The other Huguenot strongholds were immediately yielded up. Richelieu, however, generously continued to the Huguenots the freedom of their religious worship.

By a court intrigue, Richelieu was temporarily deposed from power in 1630; but, being reinstated, from this time his supremacy was irrevocably established. His administration forms an epoch in the history of the constitution of the kingdom, and of its relations with other countries. It is memorable for a series of great measures, through which the posture of affairs underwent a complete and permanent change. Of these, the first, and most lasting in its results, was that by which the absolute authority of the sovereign was established. As will have been observed in our previous

narrative, the power of the French kings had been greatly controlled, and in many cases over-ridden by the feudal privileges of the nobles. On some occasions the power of the crown had been reduced to a cipher. Richelieu, by his vigorous, and sometimes very severe measures, succeeded in breaking down the political power, and subduing the arrogant assumptions, of the great families; several among whom lost their heads on the scaffold, while not a few were condemned to life-long imprisonment. His most inveterate and most powerful adversary was Gaston, Duke of Orleans, brother of the king; but he triumphed over him, and also over the queen-mother, who was obliged to withdraw into exile at Cologne.

To break down the fabric of provincial feudalism, Richelieu fell upon another device, which cannot be commended for its honesty. It consisted in attracting the nobles to Paris, where, by a course of luxury and extravagance, they would be so far financially ruined as to become dependent on the favour of the court. To further plans of this kind, various improvements were carried out in the capital. The palace of the Tuileries was enlarged and beautified, literature and the arts were patronised, the *Académie Française* was organised in 1635, the medical botanical garden established, and a taste for dress and refinement encouraged. In his own princely dwelling, the great minister gave an example of the most luxurious and costly style of living. From this time, the higher classes in France, for the greater part, lost their provincial character, and fixed their affections in the capital. In some quarters, more especially in La Vendée, noblemen and gentlemen continued to live in their châteaux; but too frequently, elsewhere, estates

in the country were left to the administration of stewards, by whom all the old petty oppressions were exercised over the unhappy tenants and peasantry.

In 1618, broke out in Germany the famous 'Thirty Years' War,' between the Catholics and Protestants. The wish of Richelieu being to exalt France by every available means, he saw an opportunity for doing so by carrying on a war against Spain, and by deceitfully fomenting internal disaffection in Germany. For this purpose he did not scruple to ally himself with the designs of the German Protestants, and even with the great champion of the Protestant cause, Gustavus of Sweden. In order to lower Austria, he took part with the disaffected Austro-Spanish provinces in the Netherlands. A repetition of a former manœuvre was practised. On the ground of helping German allies, a tract of country on the left bank of the Rhine was occupied with French troops, and these, as we shall see in the next reign, were not got rid of without a sacrifice of German territory.

Richelieu's administration was signalised by the firm footing with which the French established themselves in Canada. For upwards of a century, they had been forming settlements on the coast and inlets of North America. The first notable explorer of the St Lawrence was Jacques Cartier, who, near the Indian village of Hochelaga, founded the city of Montreal in 1535. The greatest of all the French navigators was Samuel de Champlain, who, with an expedition fitted out under the auspices of Henry IV., proceeded up the St Lawrence, and, besides founding Quebec, 3d July 1608, did much to consolidate the French power in Canada, of which he was appointed governor in 1633. This great man—

for such he was from his energy and heroic patriotism—died 1635. He left a voluminous account of his various expeditions, which has been deservedly appreciated.

On account of the abrogation of feudal jurisdictions, there arose, in the reign of Henry II. (1551), the practice of appointing provincial overseers, then styled *commissaires départis.* Under the complete system of centralisation established by Richelieu in the reign of Louis XIII., these functionaries, under the designation of Intendants, became the organs of the royal minister, to the exclusion of all provincial action. To them belonged the proportioning of assessments, the levying of soldiers, the procuring of supplies for the army and the royal magazines, the keeping of roads and public edifices in repair, and the regulation of the trade in corn from one province to another. The performance of duties so very miscellaneous gave these officials considerable local, if not despotic, power.

Richelieu died 4th December 1642, having, with his dying breath, recommended the king to place in his stead Cardinal Mazarin, who was, he said, the only person qualified to carry out his political system. Louis XIII. did not long survive. He died 14th May 1643, leaving two infant sons: the elder ascended the throne as Louis XIV.; the second was Philippe I., Duke of Orleans, Chartres, Valois, and Nemours, progenitor of the Orleans branch of the House of Bourbon.

## CHAPTER IX.

### LOUIS XIV.—1643-1715.

LOUIS XIV., born 5th September 1638, became king in 1643, when only five years of age. There was accordingly a long minority, with the queen-mother, Anne of Austria, as regent, and Cardinal Mazarin as prime-minister. Mazarin, or, more correctly, Mazarini, who was an Italian, did not possess the financial genius of Richelieu, but he emulated him in the desire to establish a centralised despotism. The policy of demoralising the nobility and gentry by attracting them to Paris, was continued with renewed ardour. The system was, in effect, a robbery of the provinces to enrich the capital; while it was attended with the additional evil of withdrawing from the rural districts those who, by their means and position, ought to have been qualified to take part in the business of local administration. It likewise gave the nobles an opportunity of forming intrigues and factions, which, with all their dependence on the court, they were not slow to make use of. Considered altogether, few plans for producing a state of political decrepitude could have been more effectual. In the way of contrast: at this time there were maturing in England those principles of civil and religious liberty which, fifty years later, found

their consummation in the Bill of Rights and the Revolution Settlement.

The wars begun by Richelieu were continued by his successor, for no other reason than to elevate France by the depression of Spain, Austria, and Germany. Fortune favoured this settled purpose by giving to France two great military commanders. The first was Louis, Prince of Condé, commonly termed the 'Great Condé' (son of the Condé who had been concerned in the wars of Louis XIII.). The second was Vicomte de Turenne, who had already shewn masterly generalship in the war against Spain. Condé was still a youth when, being commander in the Netherlands, he fought and gained the battle of Rocroi, 19th May 1643, with which brilliant victory over the Spaniards, the reign of Louis XIV. was commenced. Condé, along with Turenne, soon after gained several victories over the Germans and Spaniards; and it may be said that, from these extraordinary successes, a taste for conquest and military glory was firmly implanted in the French character.

During the foreign war in the early years of Louis XIV., there broke out (1648) an internal convulsion, historically known as the 'wars of the Fronde.' The term Fronde is from the French word *frondeur*, a slinger, and was metaphorically employed to signify a grumbler, or one who throws out censorious remarks. The frondeurs on this occasion were certain princes and nobles who felt themselves aggrieved by being excluded from high offices, and their place supplied by foreigners. In their hatred of Mazarin, they were joined by the Parliament of Paris, which, contrary to what it thought was its privileges, was compelled to register royal edicts imposing taxes. The

people took part with the frondeurs; the dissensions led to the erecting of barricades in the streets; the court removed to St Germain; and Condé blockaded Paris.

In his *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, Voltaire draws a comparison between the decorous gravity and deliberation with which the English prosecuted Charles I.—London being in no degree excited, even on the day of his execution—and the inconsiderate levity of the French in conducting the wars of the Fronde. In the midst of the troubles, he says, the nobles met to settle what ladies should be entitled to claim the *tabouret* (a footstool to sit upon) in presence of the queen! At the outbreak, the populace of Paris rushed about with gay ribbons on their hats, and held uproarious deliberations in the worst kind of taverns. There was universal fun and laughter; and nothing was so much relished in these delirious proceedings as the amusing fact, that the handle of a dagger had been seen sticking out of the pocket of the archbishop of Paris on going to take his seat in the Parliament—the joke being that the dagger was called the archbishop's breviary! The whole affair of the Fronde, with its confusion of factions, change of sides, and want of steady purpose, was a protracted burlesque on civil war. After dragging wearily on for a number of years, a formal pacification took place in 1659.

In the course of 1648, the Thirty Years' War in Germany terminated by the mutual exhaustion of the parties more immediately concerned—Roman Catholics and Protestants. After the sufferings which had been inflicted, both were disposed for peace, which was secured by the treaty of Westphalia, signed at Münster, 24th October 1648. By one of the terms of this famed

treaty, all persecution on the score of religion was forbidden in Germany. The treaty entitled the different states, large and small, composing the German empire, to contract alliances with each other or with foreign powers, if these were not opposed to the general interests of the empire. The privilege so confirmed, and for which the respective states struggled with the concurrence of France, proved fatal to German power and unity, for it laid the country open to the devices and encroachments of its watchful and ever-ambitious neighbour. Besides this means of sowing discord, an immediate and substantial advantage was secured by the French.

In their professed zeal to help the Protestant states of Germany, the French had been allowed to obtain a temporary military occupation of the left bank of the Rhine, from Strasburg to Coblentz. Now that the war was over, they refused to withdraw, unless Alsace was ceded as an indemnity for the expenses to which they had been put. The emperor was powerless, except to protest; and at last it was agreed that France should have a large part of this rich territory. The important free city of Strasburg, and a number of counties and abbacies holding directly from the emperor, were expressly excepted; but with Metz, which had been secured by the stratagem of Montmorency in 1552, and the large section of Alsace now resigned to them by the treaty of Westphalia, the French established such a footing on the left bank of the Rhine as to facilitate further acquisitions.

The peace of Westphalia did not put an end to the war between France and Spain, which had begun in 1635. In 1657, France entered into an alliance with

England (Cromwell having declared war on Spain in 1655), and conquered several fortified places in the Spanish Netherlands. Spain at the same time suffered losses at sea and in America; and in Italy, Savoy took Spanish Lombardy. Both parties were now willing for peace, which took place in 1659. Spain ceded to France the province of Roussillon with its capital Perpignan, and a few other places, so that the Pyrenees have since been the boundary of the two countries. In the Netherlands, Spain ceded Artois and portions of Flanders, Hainault, and Luxemburg, with the fortresses of Arras, Hesdin, Gravelines, Landrecy, Le Quesnoy, Thionville, Montmedy, Marienburg, and Philippeville. France, on the other side, promised not to aid Portugal, with which Spain was at feud. The Prince of Condé, and the Dukes of Lorraine, Savoy, and Modena, were reinstated as before the war.

This peace with Spain, called the peace of the Pyrenees, led, in 1660, to the marriage of Louis XIV., now twenty-two years of age, with Maria Theresa, eldest daughter of Philip IV. of Spain. Both Maria Theresa and Louis renounced for themselves and descendants all claim to the Spanish crown, as had been previously done by Louis's father and mother. Maria Theresa is said to have possessed neither beauty nor other attractive qualities. Little was expected from the young king; his education had been neglected, and his conduct was dissolute; he, however, possessed abilities, which he speedily manifested. Mazarin, under whom the influence of France had increased, died in 1661; whereupon the king suddenly assumed the reins of government; and from that time forth carried into effect with rare energy a political theory of pure despotism,

for which previous circumstances had paved the way. His famous saying, '*L'état, c'est moi*' ('I am the state'), expressed the principle to which everything was accommodated. Here, then, was fairly launched the *Grand Monarque*—the *Louis Quatorze*—of the accounts of whose magnificence, overwhelming to popular fancy, there is no end. For any amount of grandeur, Louis was peculiarly favoured by nature. He had a cool and clear head, with much dignity and amenity of manners, great activity, and indomitable perseverance, for which he was indebted to a good constitution—a constitution which extended his life far beyond the ordinary span of that of French sovereigns.

The times were favourable for the appearance of this imposing personage. France was suffering from the depletion of foreign and internal wars. The nation longed for repose, and to secure this blessing, was willing to be ruled by an autocrat. Louis was ably supported by his ministers in carrying out plans for relieving the public distress, invigorating the wasted finances, and imparting prosperity to trade and manufactures. The most notable of these ministers was Colbert, a person of Scottish extraction, who began life as apprentice to a woollen-draper at Rheims; at Paris, his talents procured him an introduction to Mazarin; and by Louis XIV. he was, in 1661, appointed controller-general of the finances. In this post his ability resembled that of Sully. He immensely increased the public revenue, lessened the national debt, developed the industry of the country, and organised various colonies for the promotion of commercial enterprise.

Colbert was in some respects in advance of his time. Although a protectionist in a national point of view,

he attempted to promote freedom of trade between different provinces of the kingdom, but in this he was only in a limited degree successful, and long afterwards certain provinces continued to levy protective duties against the merchandise brought from other parts of France. As regards trade guilds in towns, he laboured under the antiquated delusion, that these exclusive corporations, with their narrow-minded and troublesome regulations, maintained a high standard of excellence in their respective branches of manufacture. The restrictions of the guilds had been denounced as an intolerable grievance by the States-general in 1614. Colbert, nevertheless, supported them, only attempting to improve the regulations, and to further a superiority in manufacture by means of bounties. As similar illusions prevailed among English statesmen and traders until our own times, Colbert's ignorance of the true principles of commerce may be thought excusable.

We do not learn that this great man made any attempt to promote a general system of education, beyond what was given in the system of provincial colleges. Colbert's notions of learning, like those of Richelieu and Mazarin, found an outlet in establishing societies in Paris. He founded the Academies of Inscriptions, Science, and Architecture. At heart, he was a true lover of his country, and, according to his lights, did the best to advance its interests. Dunkirk had been captured by the English, under Oliver Cromwell, in 1658. Colbert patriotically restored it to France, by buying it for £500,000 from Charles II., who meanly parted with it for his own advantage, as the money was never paid into the national exchequer.

Favoured by Colbert's ability as a financier, Louis

XIV. was able to raise and equip a powerful army to prosecute his ambitious schemes. On the death of Philip IV. of Spain, Louis, as his son-in-law, set up a claim to a part of the Spanish Netherlands. Now began, in 1667, his celebrated wars in Flanders and Germany, carried on with the assistance of Condé and Turenne, and by which he became the terror of Europe. In the course of these wars there were various shiftings of the alliances. Charles II. of England, bought by French gold, took part at first with France against the Dutch. In the end, England joined the alliance against France, and Louis XIV. saw fit to put an end to the wanton and desolating contest. By the peace of Nimeguen (1678 and 1679), Louis, while giving up some of his conquests, acquired a number of places in the Netherlands, together with Franche-Comté, which had belonged to Spain.

Although Louis was now ostensibly at peace with Germany, he resolved to continue his aggressions on it without declaring war. Accordingly, while a congress, proposed by himself, was sitting at Frankfort for the settlement of disputes between France and the empire, a body of French troops in Alsace, in the middle of the night, 28th to 29th September 1681, stole from a neighbouring wood and occupied the approaches to Strasburg, and soon an army of 40,000 men surrounded the city. There were no means of defence, and under the threat of being immediately stormed and pillaged, the citizens were obliged to open their gates. Strasburg was captured. This virtually decided the fate of the country. The French acquisitions were sanctioned by the peace of Ryswick, 1697, and Alsace was henceforth a French province, with the exception

of a small part at its southern extremity, which was taken from Germany at the Revolution.

In 1685, arose a new war on the Rhine. The Elector of the Palatinate having died that year, leaving his sister, the Duchess of Orleans, heiress of his movable property, Louis claimed for her all the allodial lands. By direction of Louvois, the war-minister, now began the most horrid outrages under Turenne in the Palatinate and neighbouring districts, of which the country still bears painful and significant traces. The palace of Heidelberg, once the residence of Elizabeth Stuart, remains till this day a shattered ruin. Worms, where diets of the empire were once held, was so far destroyed and ruined, as to be ever since a poor dull place, resembling a woe-begone and deserted village. Spires suffered entire destruction. The houses were blown up; the town was levelled with the dust; and the wretched inhabitants were driven forth by soldiers and bands of executioners, who threatened death to all who might offer resistance. A few of them afterwards returned, but the place was only distinguishable by heaps of rubbish.

As if to cover moral delinquencies, and satisfy his own conscience, Louis XIV. professed the most profound attachment to the Roman Catholic Church. As early as 1662, he commenced a systematic persecution of the Protestants by the issue of sundry enactments which rendered scarcely practicable their religious meetings, according to the toleration granted by the Edict of Nantes. All varieties of restrictions were imposed in order to induce them to renounce the Reformed faith. Colbert, in his magnanimity, had restrained persecution. His correction of abuses, and

diligent services to promote the national advancement, were rewarded with ingratitude by both king and people. Dying in Paris in 1683, his age and his exalted character became the subject of scurrilous lampoons; and, to save his body from popular outrage, his funeral took place at night under military protection. Now that he was gone, the last obstacle to religious persecution was removed.

Among the incitements to persecute the Huguenots, there was one that cannot be omitted. The queen died in 1683, and in about eighteen months afterwards, Louis formed a connection with Madame de Maintenon. Born a Protestant (1635), this lady had been converted to Catholicism when fourteen years of age. At sixteen, she married the poet Scarron, and she was left a widow by his death in 1660. Introduced to the king with a view to educating the children of Madame de Montespan, she fascinated him by her fine form, beautiful hands, sprightly countenance, and affectionate manner. Marriage with her in a regular way being against law and etiquette, Louis was married to her secretly in 1684. By this irregular union, she did not become queen, but was treated as such by the king, and from his family and court she received the most respectful deference.

As a convert, Madame de Maintenon was a furious zealot, and was not long in instigating Louis to adopt sharp measures for extirpating all enemies of the church. The stronghold of the Protestants extended from Rochelle, along the borders of the Pyrenees, to Languedoc; and in a mountainous portion of that province, known as the Cevennes, they held most stanchly to their opinions. Ordinary tyrannical measures having failed,

Louis resorted to military force. Troops of mounted soldiers were let loose upon the inhabitants, and those who would not renounce their religious belief, were remorselessly slaughtered. In Languedoc alone, as many as 100,000 persons are said to have been put to death, generally with cruel tortures. These merciless operations, which obtained the name of *dragonnades*, from being carried out by dragoons, remain a foul blot on the memory of Louis XIV.

The dragonnades failed to extirpate the Huguenots of the Cevennes, many of whom took up arms in defence of their lives and homes, and a civil war raged less or more in the district for a number of years. In his exasperation, Louis XIV. issued a decree, 18th October 1685, revoking the Edict of Nantes, by which the profession of the Reformed faith was rendered impossible throughout the whole of France, excepting in those mountainous districts where the people had assumed an attitude of defiance. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes was not only an act of cruelty, but of extreme folly. It was equivalent to a decree for banishing the most industrious, peaceful, intelligent, and religious part of the nation. Rather than conform to the established religion, 400,000 Protestants quitted France, and found a hospitable refuge in Great Britain, Holland, Prussia, Switzerland, and America. The loss to France was immense, and the gain to other countries not less. The exiles carried with them a knowledge of silk spinning and weaving, dyeing, crystal-glass making, painting, the manufacture of delicate kinds of jewellery, watch-making, and other useful arts, along with general refinement and intelligence. Some families in England distinguished in law, literature, commerce, and statesmanship trace their

origin to the refugees whom Louis XIV. drove so madly from his kingdom in 1685.

Such were some of the doings of the Grand Monarque, who was obeyed with Asiatic servility. Admiring his grandeur and successful audacity, the French people saw with composure every vestige of political independence swept away. No assemblies of the States-general, or of the Notables, were held; the nobles had lost both the desire and the ability to assert political power. The municipal corporations, dating from the Roman occupation, and which, sustained by the edicts of St Louis, had escaped the tyrannies of the House of Valois, were now reduced to the condition of being nominated by the court. The rural districts remained under the control of intendants, who were immediately responsible to the ministers, and they to the king, who was his own prime-minister. The Parliament of Paris, so far as it could be a check on his arbitrary measures, was insolently silenced. Visiting it one day, and flourishing a whip in his hand, Louis told the members that they must henceforth mind their proper duties, and not interfere with his ordinances. Even the courts of justice yielded to the absolute sway of the monarch, who interfered at pleasure with the ordinary course of law. Louis also asserted a right to dispose at his own will of all properties within the boundaries of his realm, and took credit to himself for gracious moderation in exercising it. The court was the very heart of the political and national life of France, and there the utmost splendour was maintained; and a system of etiquette was established, which was a sort of perpetual worship of the king.

Louis XIV. added to the attractions of Paris, and

some of its finer buildings date from his reign. Among these may be mentioned the *Hôtel des Invalides*, or hospital for disabled soldiers, founded in 1670. Besides erecting new churches, streets, and places, he, with the advice of Colbert, set on foot the royal tapestry manufacture, called the Gobelins, from the name of a dyer who originally occupied the establishment. The citizens and municipality of Paris, in recognition of his warlike exploits, erected two ornamental gateways—the Porte St Martin and Porte St Denis—which still exist, bearing sculptures commemorative of the military triumphs of the Grand Monarque. The greatest architectural work of Louis XIV. was the palace of Versailles, which was built at an enormous cost. Situated at the distance of eleven miles to the south-west of Paris, with a regularly-built town in front, and with extensive pleasure-grounds behind, it became, until recent times, a favourite residence of royalty. In his reign, all that concerns matters of luxury and taste rose to a high pitch of splendour. The flowing and powdered periwigs, the grand dresses, the fans, jewellery, ornamental snuff-boxes, cocked-hats, and innumerable fanciful articles which came into vogue in the early part of the eighteenth century, owed their origin to the reign of Louis Quatorze, whose court set the fashion to nearly the whole of Europe.

The era of Louis XIV. developed a number of brilliant writers, and men distinguished in various branches of learning and art. It was the Augustan age of French literature. Corneille, who wrote some of his works in the previous reign, brought the classic style of tragedy to its highest point of grandeur, though to English taste it is stilted and unnatural. His best pieces

are *Le Cid*, *Les Horaces*, and *Cinna*. Pascal, in his *Lettres Provinciales*, established a standard of French prose; while Descartes, in his *Discours sur la Méthode*, shewed the adaptability of the language to subjects requiring preciseness of expression. Bossuet and Flechier won respect by their noble funeral orations; Bourdaloue and Massillon, by their eloquent preaching; Fenelon, archbishop of Cambrai, by his learning and earnest exhortations; and Pascal, by his Christian view of human experiences.

In the dramatic literature essentially belonging to this reign, Racine and Molière stand forth conspicuous. Racine was pre-eminent in tragedy, as his *Andromaque*, *Iphigénie*, *Phèdre*, testify. Molière was inimitable in comedy, and his wonderful powers of delineating human character from a humorous point of view have never been surpassed. Among his best pieces, we may instance *Tartufe*, *Le Misanthrope*, and *Les Femmes Savantes*. La Fontaine obtained celebrity by his moral fables; and Boileau for his *L'Art Poétique*. La Rochefoucauld and La Bruyère, in their *Sentences* and *Caractères*, depicted human character, with its peculiarities and foibles. Malebranche displayed great depth and originality of thought, combined with perspicuity and elegance, in his *De la Recherche de la Vérité*, a work designed to trace psychologically the causes of the errors to which the human mind is liable. Bayle may be said to have led the way as an encyclopædist. In 1697, appeared his *Grand Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*, a work, however, more ponderous in bulk than estimable for its disquisitions, which caused at the time much controversy. This was the age of memoirs and letters. No letters have ever obtained such celebrity as those

of Madame de Sévigné. No comic novels excelled those of Lesage—*Gil Blas de Santillane*, and *Le Diable Boiteux*—which appeared at the conclusion of Louis XIV.'s reign. As regards the arts, Vauban for military, and Riquet for civil, engineering, Le Brun for historical painting, Mansard for architecture, and Le Notre for gardening, are among the most memorable men of the time.

Fenelon, besides contributing by his philosophic and religious writings to the glory of French literature, did it an immortal service when he gave it his classic romance of *Télémaque*, a book widely known through its English and other translations. This charming moral story was specially composed for the instruction of his pupil, the dauphin, Louis, Duke of Burgundy. Strange to say, the work only brought Fenelon into disgrace. The fiction, being assumed to be a satire on the king and some members of the court, was publicly condemned; and its author was banished to his archiepiscopal diocese. The circumstance illustrates the baseness of Louis XIV. He required to bask in a continual round of adulation, and to be flattered even in his vices. The learned societies which had been founded by Richelieu, Mazarin, and Colbert were degraded to the character of so many baits to attract men of literary and artistic aspirations to Paris, where they could be drawn into the vortex of the court, and be made useful in giving the gloss of genius to its manifold profligacies.

From the polluting moral atmosphere of the capital, however, many men, eminent for their learning, sought a refuge in that species of retirement for which, as is well known, the Roman Catholic Church affords opportunities. No retreat of this nature obtained so much

celebrity as that of Port Royal, an abbey situated in the neighbourhood of Versailles. Here, Pascal resided for a time, in the community of scholars and divines, and made himself famous by his *Lettres Provinciales*, the origin of which may be briefly explained.

During this and the preceding reign, the Gallican church was much agitated by a theological controversy, which was important in its doctrinal, social, and political results. The controversy originated in a theological treatise by Cornelius Jansen, an eminent Dutch divine, bishop of Ypres in Flanders, who died 1638. Jansen endeavoured to prove that the teaching of the Jesuit schools on grace, free-will, and predestination, did not correspond with a correct analysis of the doctrine on these subjects by St Augustine, and was therefore heretical. The commotion caused by this bold and scholarly exposition was extraordinary. The Jesuits were furious, and by an appeal to the pope, a bull was issued condemning Jansen's opinions. People took different sides; but it was greatly in favour of the Jansenist views, that they were embraced by Pascal and other members of the community of Port Royal. Louis XIV. was not a person to allow the slightest invasion of the usually accredited doctrines. By a peremptory decree, he repressed those promulgated by Jansen, and caused the abbey of Port Royal to be destroyed; but the exposure of the principles of the Jesuits by Pascal in his celebrated *Provincial Letters* proved permanently damaging to that body. Jansenism was not altogether extinguished. It continued for a long period, under various phases, to trouble the Gallican church. The more rigid of the Jansenist clergy felt themselves obliged to quit the country.

They emigrated to Holland, where the sect still exists, as a species of Calvinistic Roman Catholic dissenters, consisting of about five thousand members with twenty-five churches.

The latest military undertaking of Louis XIV. was the War of the Spanish Succession, which he entered upon to carry out certain ambitious designs; his object in reality being to unite the sovereignties of France and Spain in his own family. To understand the nature of the war, a few explanations are necessary. Philip IV. of Spain had a son, who succeeded him as Charles II.; he had also two daughters, Maria Theresa, who married Louis XIV., and Margaret Theresa, who married Leopold, emperor of Germany. Louis XIV., by his queen, Maria Theresa, had several daughters and three sons. All the sons predeceased him. The eldest of them, Louis, the dauphin, left two sons, the eldest of whom was Louis, Duke of Burgundy, who became dauphin, and the younger was Philippe, Duke of Anjou. In other words, Louis XIV. had, in his old days, only these two grandsons (with several great-grandchildren). It will be recollected that, when Maria Theresa married Louis, she renounced all claim which she or her descendants might eventually have to the crown of Spain. Unfortunately for the peace of Europe, her brother, Charles II., died without issue, 1st November 1700. Louis XIV., with more foresight than honesty, had persuaded Charles, on his deathbed, to make a will, leaving Spain to his second grandson, Philippe, Duke of Anjou; and immediately on the death of Charles, regardless of the solemn renunciation he had made, he accepted the Spanish throne on behalf of his grandson, and sent him off without delay to take possession. In

bidding him adieu, he gave utterance to the words, which have become historically memorable: '*Il n'y a plus de Pyrénées*' ('There are no longer any Pyrenees').

There was, however, a rival claimant for the Spanish crown. Leopold, emperor of Germany, considered he had a right to interfere. His mother was Mary Ann, the younger daughter of Philip III., and at their marriage there had been no renunciation of the Spanish crown, as in the case of the elder sister. Besides his claim on this ground, Leopold had married Margaret Theresa, daughter of Philip IV. For these reasons, as well as on account of the renunciation of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV., he supported the claim of his son, Charles, who afterwards became the emperor Charles VI. Neither party would yield, and in 1702 there broke forth the War of the Spanish Succession, which was carried on at a disadvantage to France in the Netherlands and Italy. The two great French commanders, Turenne and Condé, had long since vanished, and the chief dependence was on Marshal Villars. We cannot go into an account of the hostilities. The French sustained one defeat after another at the hands of the allied British-Dutch-German army under Marlborough in the Low Countries, and under Prince Eugene in Italy. A combined English and Dutch force captured Gibraltar, after a bombardment, in 1704, and ever since, in spite of numerous attacks, this key of the Mediterranean has belonged to Great Britain.

Among the severe defeats of the French were that at Blenheim, 13th August 1704, and that at Ramillies, 23d May 1706. The victories of Marlborough were discouraging, but the French, with their habitual light-heartedness, happily consoled themselves with epigrams, and more

especially with the satirical song, beginning, '*Malbrouk s'en va-t-en guerre*' ('Marlborough has gone to the war'), which remained long a popular favourite. In the midst of the desperate struggle with Marlborough, Louis found he had another enemy to contend with. The Huguenots in the Cevennes maintained their guerrilla warfare with indomitable courage. Known as Camisards, from the circumstance, as is believed, of their wearing a species of chemise or blouse, they were at this time particularly formidable, and Louis had to send large bodies of troops to extinguish them, which was done with the usual ferocity.

Villars, the most enterprising and fortunate of the French generals, was at last fairly beaten by Marlborough, at Malplaquet, September 1709. After some further campaigning, besieging, and negotiating, the opportune death of the emperor rescued France from the brink of destruction. The British now withdrew from the war, but it was carried on some time longer by the Dutch and Prince Eugene. At length, a general peace, which included the Dutch, was effected by the treaty of Utrecht, 11th April 1713. The Austrians made peace by the treaty of Baden in 1714. These treaties sanctioned the occupation of the Spanish throne by the grandson of Louis, who was the first of the House of Bourbon in that country, and reigned as Philip V. For the concession of Spain, the French relinquished some valuable colonies. The war, which had been carried on at a prodigious sacrifice of life and money for a period of about eleven years, almost ruined France. The king had gained his ends, but by the impoverishment of his subjects. A terrible fermentation prevailed, but Louis maintained to the last an unbending despotism.

The history of the Grand Monarque would be incomplete if we omitted to speak of the tyranny he did not scruple to exercise over the individuals who unhappily incurred his vengeance. Louis XI., as has been seen, cruelly confined Cardinal Ballue for years in an iron cage. Ever since his reign, there had been several state-prisons, in the form of strong and gloomy fortresses, where the kings could put away secretly such persons as gave them displeasure. Fathers of families, priests, soldiers, statesmen, noblemen of the court, ladies of quality—all were numbered among the victims of this iniquitous abuse of power. There was usually no form of trial; *lettres de cachet*, or sealed warrants, were put in force with merciless severity. During his reign, there were issued about nine thousand of these terrible writs. Sometimes the individual thus taken suddenly into custody would be transferred to the Bastille at Paris, where he would be kept for years, or for life, holding no communication whatever with the external world. At other times, in cases of greater vengefulness, the poor victim would be thrown into a vault, to die, within a few days or weeks, of starvation.

Whether Louis XIV. resorted to this extreme barbarity, is not known. Unrestrained by scruples of generosity, honour, or religion, it is at least certain that, throughout his long reign, he was one of the most detestable tyrants that have ever challenged the execration of mankind. The Bastille and other state-prisons were filled by him with unfortunate captives, many of them ignorant of the offences laid to their charge, and all exposed, as authentic records verify, to the worst practices of the most barbarous ages, even to the infliction of torture itself. In everything connected with these prisoners,

the utmost secrecy was usually observed: they were seized in the dead of night, fictitious names given to them, and all traces of their fate obliterated. Thus the anguish of families was increased by the very uncertainty in which they remained as to what had befallen their vanished relatives.

Of all the cases of this kind, none has obtained such notoriety, or excited so much curiosity, as that of the 'Man with the Iron Mask.' The accounts of this person, which first appeared about the middle of the eighteenth century, are now known to have been overlaid with fiction. The real facts would seem to be these. In the year 1677, Louis XIV. conceived the idea of inducing the Duke of Mantua to permit the introduction of a French garrison into Casale, a strongly fortified town, which would give access to the whole of Lombardy. This scheme he proposed to effect through the medium of Count Matthioli, whom the duke sent to the French ambassador at Venice on this secret and treacherous mission, and afterwards to Paris, with full powers to negotiate a treaty. Matthioli having accepted money from the French minister as the price of his services, afterwards had the baseness to reveal the affair for a bribe to the court of Savoy. Enraged on discovering Matthioli's treachery, Louis XIV. had him secretly arrested and conveyed to the fortress of Pignerol, 2d May 1679.

Here, and at several other state-prisons in succession, extraordinary precautions were taken for his concealment, as the arrest of the plenipotentiary of a sovereign prince would have been a European scandal which even Louis XIV. did not care to face. He was allowed no communication with the outer world, and

when carried from one prison to another, he wore a mask, not of iron, according to popular tradition, but one of black velvet, interlaced with whalebone, and fastened behind the head with a padlock, leaving the patient at liberty to eat, drink, and respire. The name under which he was referred to at first in correspondence with the king, or Louvois, minister of war, was the Sieur de Lestang. On the 18th September 1698, he was brought to the Bastille, where he lingered five more tedious years, and died on the 19th November 1703, being buried the day after. All possible pains were taken to eradicate every vestige of his existence, and to cover his memory with an impenetrable mystery. The fact of a person of some note having been immured in the way mentioned for a space of twenty-four years, throws a strange light on the political condition of France so lately as the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century.

Louis XIV., memorable for magnificence and his meanness, died, after a short illness, 1st September 1715. During his long reign of seventy-two years, he had for contemporaries in England Charles I., Cromwell, Charles II., James II., William and Mary, William III., Queen Anne, and, for a short time, George I. His era, it will be observed, was that of the great constitutional struggle in England, with which he had no sympathy. When that struggle was brought to a close by the Revolution, he received James II., and assigned him the palace of St Germain as a residence; for which act of hospitality to an unfortunate monarch he merits praise. He afterwards aided James in his attempt to recover the throne by invading Ireland; the failure of which attempt by the memorable defeat at the

Boyne, 1st July 1690, belongs to British history. At the death of Louis XIV., France was politically and physically prostrate. The enormous drain of treasure in court extravagance and successive wars had ruined trade; by military exhaustion, towns were nearly depopulated, and tracts of country had gone out of cultivation. And yet, to the last, Louis XIV. dazzled the eyes of his infatuated subjects with a splendour which was contributing to their destruction. There have been kings with grosser vices, but none who wrought such incalculable mischief on a whole people.

# CHAPTER X.

## LOUIS XV.—1715-1774.

THE sons of Louis XIV., as has been said, predeceased him. For a time, his heir-apparent was his grandson, Louis, Duke of Burgundy, who, as pupil of Fenelon, had shewn good talents and dispositions. From papers which he wrote, there is a belief that he contemplated a beneficial change in the constitution. Fate determined otherwise. This hopeful prince died in 1712. He left two sons, the elder of whom survived him only a month. The younger, born 15th February 1710, now became dauphin, and he succeeded to the throne as Louis XV. in 1715, on the decease of his great-grandfather. Here, again, was a child-king, and consequently a minority. In cases of this kind, the Parliament of Paris, in its capacity of guardian of the state, performed the duty of selecting a regent. On the present occasion it appointed the nearest prince of the blood, Philippe II., Duke of Orleans.

Minorities, it seems, were not deemed a serious misfortune. They might be bad for the nation, but besides being a novelty, which was a great matter, they offered the double chance of a scramble for place, jobs, and various kinds of court favour, according to the expectations that might be formed, first of the regent, and

afterwards of the young king when he came into power. Voltaire says characteristically of the demise of the Grand Monarque: 'Though the life and death of Louis XIV. were certainly glorious, yet was he less lamented than he deserved. The love of novelty; the approach of a minority, in which every one hoped to make a fortune; the dispute about the constitution, which then exasperated the minds of the people—all conspired to cause the news of his death to be received with something more than indifference. We beheld the same people, who, in 1686, had importuned Heaven with tears and sighs for the recovery of the monarch who was sick, follow his funeral procession with demonstrations of a very different nature.'

The appointment of the Duke of Orleans favoured the hopes of that multifarious class who, without industry or means, but proud of their rank, condescended to assist the regent in emptying the national exchequer. We would rather be silent on the subject of the duke's debaucheries and extravagances, which were carried on chiefly in that extensive building known as the Palais-Royal. This palace, which environs an open quadrangle, was built by Cardinal Richelieu, and was bequeathed by him to Louis XIII., whose sister, Henrietta Maria, widow of Charles I. of England, resided here for a short time. Subsequently, it became an appanage of the Dukes of Orleans, and here the regent, with his titled and abandoned associates, helped to sap the foundations of the monarchy. On all hands it is agreed that, by his follies, he greatly aggravated the political disorder, and, by indulging the whims of a charlatan, he brought about a financial crisis. About the time he entered office, there arrived in Paris a Scotsman

named John Law, a refugee on account of a duel, who was full of extraordinary notions of enriching the world by the creation of a paper currency. In 1716, Law (or Lass, as the French persistently called him) set up a private bank in Paris, which, proving successful, was patronised by the regent, and in 1718 was raised to the dignity of a national bank, with various important privileges. It also conducted the commerce of the India Company of France, which had been set on foot by Colbert, and was now in a languishing condition.

Possessing good credit, Law's bank issued prodigious quantities of notes. By disseminating this species of fictitious wealth, the hopes of the nation were excited to an inconceivable extent. In connection with the bank, a project for reclaiming and settling on lands in the valley of the Mississippi, and called the Mississippi Scheme, was originated in 1719. It was a joint-stock company, the shares of which soon rose to an unprecedented nominal value. In 1720, in the midst of the frenzy, Law was made a councillor of state, and comptroller-general of finances. The fate of the Mississippi Scheme is well known. It suffered a complete collapse; Law lost his office, and had to flee from France; while vast numbers of persons were ruined—the disaster adding greatly to the general embarrassment of affairs.

In 1723, Louis XV. was crowned, and assuming the reins of government, the Duke of Orleans relinquished the regency, but acted for a short time as prime-minister. He died from exhaustion by his profligacies in less than a year afterwards. The youthful king had been carefully educated by Cardinal Fleury, a man of sound judgment, simple habits, and singularly placid temperament. To this ecclesiastic Louis was greatly attached, and he

appointed him his prime-minister and adviser. The selection was not popular. Fleury gave offence by his prudent economy, his recovery of the finances, and abstinence from war; his conduct, however, was so unimpeachable, that, with some interruptions, he continued at the head of affairs. For a time, the chief consideration was to get the young king suitably married. Various princesses were thought of, including the Infanta of Spain, daughter of Philip V., who came to Paris to be shewn off, under a real or implied betrothal. Politically or socially, there were objections to all the candidates, and the choice unexpectedly fell on a young lady who was almost unknown—Maria Lesczynski, daughter of Stanislaus, the deposed king of Poland. Father and daughter were amazed at their good fortune. The marriage took place in 1725.

Fleury contrived to keep France out of war until 1733, when Louis XV. was involved in hostilities in order to support the claim of his father-in-law to the crown of Poland. Russia and Austria were against him, and an obstinate struggle ensued, in which Spain (enraged at the rejection of the Infanta) took part against France. It was a curiously confused war, which lasted two years, ending, as usual, in a compromise. Stanislaus abandoned his claim on Poland; and the German emperor had to consent to his being made Duke of Lorraine for life, with the further condition, that the duchy should be attached to France at his death. To make way for him, the Duke of Lorraine was transferred to the grand-duchy of Tuscany; afterwards, he became the husband of Maria Theresa, daughter of Charles VI. of Austria. The arrangement was considered a masterstroke of policy for the French; for it enabled them to

look forward to getting possession of Lorraine. One of the most remarkable events of this war was the cession by Austria of Naples and Sicily to Don Carlos, son of Philip V. of Spain; hence the Bourbon dynasty of the Two Sicilies.

The next war with which the French were concerned was that known as the War of the Austrian Succession, which began in 1740, about the time of the death of the aged Cardinal Fleury. The cause of the war was this: Charles VI. of Austria had no surviving son, and desired to leave his dominions to his daughter, Maria Theresa. The decree or instrument making this bequest being out of the usual routine, it was requisite that a number of European powers should give their concurrence; this was effected, and the united consent was styled the Pragmatic Sanction. Charles died in 1740, when the obligation, for divers reasons, was repudiated by France, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Naples, and Sardinia. War was commenced, and England, taking the part of Austria, sent an army to Germany in 1743. It was commanded by the Earl of Stair, and George II. supported the military manœuvres with much ability at the battle of Dettingen, 27th June 1743, when a victory was gained over the French, commanded by the Duke de Noailles. In the course of the war, Marshal Saxe, an eminent French commander, was actively engaged. He was a natural son of Augustus II., Elector of Saxony, who succeeded Lesczynski on the throne of Poland. Naturalised as a Frenchman, he distinguished himself as the greatest military genius of his age. More than a match for the English under the Duke of Cumberland, he gained several brilliant victories for the French and their allies, of which we need only mention

that of Fontenoy, 11th May 1745. A general pacification took place by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748, when Maria Theresa was confirmed in her rights.

From the time he lost Cardinal Fleury, Louis XV. employed several successive prime-ministers, but he had sunk under the influence of Madame de Pompadour, who for a time was the real ruler of France, and caused an immense misexpenditure of the public money. War broke out again with Britain concerning the boundaries of Acadia (Nova Scotia), and the erection by the French of forts along the Ohio and Mississippi, to connect Canada with Louisiana. The war was for some time prosecuted with considerable vigour. In 1756 began the 'Seven Years' War,' in which Maria Theresa endeavoured, with the assistance of Russia, to recover Silesia, which had been wrested from her in the Austrian Succession War by Frederick the Great of Prussia. France formed an alliance with Austria, contrary to the policy of ages. Britain sided with Prussia, and here was a fresh incitement to hostilities. The interference of Louis XV. in this Austro-Prussian quarrel is imputed to Madame de Pompadour, who, in her unregulated caprices, was seriously imperilling the interests of France. Everything seemed to be abandoned to her direction; and as she disposed of the command of the French armies at her pleasure, success did not attend their operations.

It is melancholy to consider what mischiefs were brought on a great nation, by a series of profligate females being suffered to interfere in counselling and directing the public administration. That fatal Seven Years' War led the French with rapid strides on the road to ruin. The state of the finances, the dispirited

condition of the army, and the outcry of the distressed people, were not sufficient to induce the king to make peace; but with a degree of infatuation, and governed by Madame de Pompadour, he obstinately persevered in the war. The British forces inflicted territorial losses on the French which they never recovered. The English, who had been hitherto a feeble power in India, established their predominance, when Clive gained the battle of Plassey, 23d June 1757, as a result of which the French footing in India shrunk to insignificant dimensions. On the 1st August 1759, the English, Hessians, and Hanoverians gained a victory at Minden over the French, who suffered severely on the occasion. At the same time, the British, by sea and land, were capturing French possessions in the West Indies and Canada. The greatest of their victories was that achieved by Wolfe, at Quebec, 13th September 1759. The consequence of this victory, in which Wolfe was unfortunately killed, was that Canada was ultimately attached to the British crown. Repeated and humiliating losses at length disposed Louis XV. for peace, which was settled by the treaty of Paris in 1763. So ended the most unfortunate war in which, till this time, France had ever been engaged.

In the early part of the war, an attempt was made by a man named Damiens to assassinate Louis XV. The motives which led him to this were not well understood. He himself alleged that it was the imperious conduct of the king towards the Parliament; with greater probability he, like Ravaillac, was governed by a maniacal impulse. On the 5th January 1757, having gone to Versailles on the previous day, he assiduously followed the king and his courtiers about everywhere; and about six o'clock at night, when the king was entering his

carriage to leave Trianon—a small palace in the park of Versailles—he aimed at him with a dagger, and managed to stab him, but not mortally. The king recognised the assassin, and Damiens was seized. As in the case of Ravaillac, the punishment inflicted on him was horrible. The hand by which he attempted the murder was burned at a slow fire; the fleshy parts of his body were torn off by pincers; and finally he was dragged about by horses, while molten lead, resin, oil, and boiling wax were poured into his wounds. Towards night the poor wretch expired, having, by an effort of will almost superhuman, kept his resolution of not confessing who were his accomplices—if, indeed, he had any. His remains were immediately burned; his house was destroyed; his father, wife, and mother were banished from France for ever; and his brothers and sisters compelled to change their names.

Madame de Pompadour tried to lessen the odium which she had popularly incurred, by a persecution of the Jesuits. Urged by her, and with the assent of the prime-minister, the Duke de Choiseul, the king banished them from France in 1764, greatly to the satisfaction of the Parliament of Paris. This was her last act; she died the same year. Recent investigations among official papers make it appear that, during the years she held an underhand sway, she spent of public money 36,000,000 livres, a sum equal to £1,427,438 sterling. At her death, her place was taken by Madame du Barry, a woman still more dissolute and worthless, and who, during her career of five years, went far beyond her predecessor in her wastefulness of public money, notwithstanding the exceeding embarrassment of the finances. The gifts of Louis XV. to her amounted to

a sum so enormous as would appear inconceivable, unless it had been ascertained, in explanation of various outlays of this nature, that £20,000,000 of the national debt of France had been incurred for expenses too ignominious to bear the light.

Since the regency of Orleans, public morals had been gradually deteriorating, not only from the evil example set by the sovereign and his companions, but from the deliberately mischievous writings of certain men of genius, against which there was, unfortunately, no proper counteracting power. The expulsion of Protestant preachers by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the divisions arising from the Jansenist controversy, are admitted to have extinguished rivalry in pulpit eloquence, and introduced a benumbing indifference into the Gallican church. Formerly, there had been at least a semblance of respect for religion. Excepting in rural districts under the charge of painstaking curés, and where there happened still to be a local gentry, there was now a boastful scepticism and infidelity, harrowing up all that was venerated or that formed the foundation of morals. Addressed to a people so impressionable, and so unacquainted with the practice of self-government as the French, the works of some authors did harm, though not written with any absolutely bad intention.

At the head of the list of writers in the reign of Louis XV. stands conspicuous the Baron de Montesquieu. His great work, on which he had been engaged twenty years, was the *Esprit des Lois*, exhibiting the relation between the laws of different countries, and their local and social circumstances. It set people thinking, and was immensely popular. Translated into different languages, it may be said to have been the first work in which

the questions of civil liberty were treated in an enlightened and systematic manner. The views which it set forth on the rights and duties of different classes of society, naturally roused the angry passions of the oppressed lower orders. The philosophical speculations of Montesquieu were followed up by the wild theories of Rousseau on the dignity and simplicity of untutored savage life, and the perfectibility of human nature. The work defining his philosophical doctrines was the *Contrat Social*, a book less reprehensible than those writings of a lighter kind, which were entirely subversive of moral obligations, and recognised no higher standard than human inclinations. His own sense of duty and self-respect might be inferred from the fact, that he paid no attention to his children, but sent the whole of them to a foundling hospital. The most charitable thing to say of Rousseau is, that he was a crazy enthusiast. He died in 1778; and the effect of his writings on French society is not badly typified at his tomb in the Pantheon, where a hand is represented holding out at a partially open door a flaming torch to set fire to the world.

Voltaire, who was a contemporary of Rousseau, and died the same year, was a voluminous writer with a singular versatility of powers, which were exercised with equal ease and nearly equal success, on tragedy, satire, romance, poetry, history, and philosophy. During his long life, he maintained an extraordinary supremacy over public opinion. Setting aside revelation, and upholding natural religion, his writings, which fascinated by their brilliance and vein of mockery and satire, were destructive of old established opinions, and materially provoked the convulsion which took place a few years

after his decease. Buffon helped in the same direction; but he is more favourably known for his *Histoire Naturelle*, which inaugurated a new era in the literature of natural history, and remains a remarkable monument of the science and learning of that period.

The Abbé Raynal, the historian of the two Indies, and Helvetius, the author of a treatise on the feelings as a source of intellectual activity, were other two of that extraordinary sect of philosophers whose writings contributed to the social derangement. The Abbé Rollin distinguished himself by his *Histoire Ancienne*, a work which, though often inaccurate in narrative, is free from any injurious tendency, and was long popular in the original as well as in a translated form. Marmontel gained celebrity for his *Moral Tales*, as also for his *Bélisaire* (Belisarius); his writings, generally inoffensive, being well known through translations.

In 1728 appeared in England the *Cyclopædia* of Ephraim Chambers, which being translated into French by an Englishman named Mills, suggested the *Encyclopédie*, which was produced (1751–1772) by a number of French men of letters in the reign of Louis XV. The founders of this work were Diderot, and D'Alembert, the geometer. The Encyclopædists, or Economists, as they were called, upheld every novelty of doctrine in philosophy and morals. All the important questions of social and political economy they treated with a freedom formerly unknown. They took care to make no attack on the government or the church; had they done so, they would have caused alarm, and might soon have found themselves inmates of the Bastille. Writing of things in the abstract, they escaped this danger; but their theories were easily applicable to the existing

condition of society, and stimulative of revolution. Strange to say, while aiming at political and religious disorganisation, they seemed to take no thought of what might be the consequences in a country which had yet to learn the simplest elements of civil and religious liberty. Incurring no remonstrance, their eloquently expressed ideas threw society into a state of mental intoxication. People suffered themselves to be carried away by theories pleasing to the imagination, and so went drifting on, they cared not whither.

It gives us a curious insight into the state of affairs in France at the middle of the eighteenth century, that then, thirty to forty years before the event, there was in men's minds an apprehension of an approaching convulsion. The Earl of Chesterfield, who was well acquainted with the condition of France, writes, in 1753: 'The confusion in France increases daily; all the symptoms which I have ever met with in history previous to great changes and revolutions in government now exist, and daily increase, in France.' When David Hume was in Paris, from 1763 to 1766, as secretary to Lord Hertford's embassy, he became acquainted with Turgot, with whom, next to D'Alembert, he formed the closest friendship. Turgot, in his letters to Hume, predicts, from the disorganised and menacing condition of French society, the storm that was to come. In one letter, he notices 'the want of any common principle of sympathy and interest connecting the aristocracy with the people,' and reflects on the dangerous consequences of such a state of matters to the peace of Europe. Rousseau, in his *Emile*, a treatise on education written in 1764, says that all see what is coming: 'We are approaching the state of crisis, and the age of

revolutions.' With such a concurrence of feeling, how strange that a nation so boastful of its intellectual capacity should have gone driving stupidly on to destruction! Turgot's remark is valuable. There was a want of sympathy, no community of interest; and the philosophers, he should have said, were as guilty of this as any others.

Voltaire's character for heartlessness was in a degree redeemed by the extraordinary exertions he made on one occasion in the cause of humanity and justice. We refer to the case of Jean Calas. The dragonnades of Louis XIV. had only in outward appearance extinguished Protestantism. The faith of the Reformers still lingered in the country, and more particularly in the southern provinces, notwithstanding the vigilance of the Inquisition. During the reign of Louis XV., persecution in its more offensive forms had, in a great measure, ceased, but the Parliament of Toulouse seized every opportunity of visiting with vengeance any one who, coming before them, was compromised on the score of religion. In Toulouse lived Jean Calas, a respectable draper, sixty-three years of age, with his family. They were Protestants, but not obtrusively so. One of Jean's sons having been converted to Roman Catholicism, was sent away from home. Shortly afterwards, on the night of 13th October 1761, the eldest son, a moping melancholy youth, committed suicide by hanging himself. All the evidence taken on the subject went to prove it was an act of self-destruction. A malicious rumour was, however, raised that the father had murdered his son to prevent his adopting the religious opinions of his brother. On no proper grounds, Calas was arraigned before the Parliament, and this tyrannical and bigoted tribunal,

without any proof of the alleged murder, condemned the poor man to be executed, in spite of his protestations of his entire innocence of the crime. The execution was carried out with the usual horrid accompaniments. On a scaffold, the bones of his legs, arms, and body were broken by a bar of iron; in this mangled condition, in a state of agony, he was exposed on a wheel for the space of two hours, and then strangled, his body being afterwards burned, and the ashes scattered to the winds. Voltaire hearing of this great iniquity, had the courage to expose the whole circumstances of the case, and denounce it in terms which did him honour. The result was an official investigation, and a reversal of the sentence by the Conseil Royal of Paris. This was too late for any personal benefit to the victim, but it was some slight consolation to his family; and the general horror of the transaction helped to put an end to the persecutions of the Protestants.

In 1766, the French were gratified by getting Lorraine actually incorporated with the kingdom, Stanislaus, the father of the queen, having died that year. It has sometimes been erroneously stated that Lorraine came to Louis XV. as the reversionary dowry of Maria Lesczynski, daughter of Stanislaus; whereas, as has been shewn, it was a piece of territory extorted by France from Germany at the adjustment of terms of peace, when concluding the war in reference to Poland. Another, although a transmarine, addition was made to the French dominions by the conquest of the island of Corsica from the Genoese, in June 1768.

Maria Lesczynski did not experience that happiness as queen of France which she had anticipated, and to which she was reasonably entitled. The neglect and

misconduct of the king gave her too much cause for concern; yet, to the world she was a model of pious and social virtues, lending dignity to the court, and veiling as far as possible the failings of her husband. She had two sons and four daughters. The younger son died in childhood. The elder son, Louis, the dauphin, died in 1765, leaving three sons and two daughters. Louis, the eldest of these princes, born 23d August 1754, was styled Duke de Berry, till, by the death of his father, he became dauphin, and immediate heir to the crown. In this young prince we are introduced to one who afterwards, as Louis XVI., was destined to encounter the political storm which was even now accumulating force from the profligacies and misexpenditure of his grandfather. The queen died in 1768.

The queen had set a good example to her daughters, and at her death they continued to reside, but in a retired manner, in the palace of Versailles. At stated times, they made ceremonious visits to the king, generally for a few minutes on his coming in from hunting, which was almost daily. The habits of Louis XV. were such as to repel persons of delicate feelings. He prided himself on being a good cook, and was acknowledged to be clever in preparing certain dishes. His great accomplishment, however, was the petty art of cutting off the top of an egg. When he dined in public, he always ate eggs, to shew his proficiency; and when, by a quick evolution of his knife, he neatly cut off the top of his egg, shouts of '*Vive le Roi!*' rewarded the wonderful performance. The evenings he spent in the revelries of the Trianon, and in a cluster of buildings in an enclosure called the *Parc-aux-Cerfs* (Deer Park). Although the dissoluteness of the whole surroundings of the court

was beyond description, to outward and ordinary appearance the strictest ceremonial etiquette was preserved. The system of etiquette, which descended to the smallest particulars, was such as to be not only at variance with all comfort, but so intolerable and ridiculous as to have proved a serious vexation to the young Austrian princess, who was selected to be the wife of the dauphin.

Marie Antoinette, archduchess of Austria, was the youngest daughter of the Emperor Francis of Lorraine and Maria Theresa. She was born on the 2d November 1755, and was educated so as to perfect her in the French language. At fifteen years of age, and on her way to France to be married, she had a foretaste of the rigorous etiquette to which she had to submit, on arriving at the frontier at Kehl. A superb pavilion had been prepared, consisting of two apartments. One of these she entered with her attendants from Vienna; the other was appropriated to the Countess de Noailles, who was to be her lady of honour, and other ladies of her bedchamber. Stripped of the whole of her German attire in the first apartment, the intermediate door was thrown open, and she entered the other, where she was received and dressed in the garments of France. Her marriage with the dauphin took place on 10th May 1770. Great were the rejoicings in Paris on the occasion; but unfortunately, by reason of a scaffold for fireworks catching fire, there was a wild commotion, which caused the death of fifty-three persons. Greatly shocked with the occurrence, the dauphin and dauphiness sent the whole of their income for a year to relieve the unfortunate families who had suffered losses by the catastrophe.

Instead of residing apart from the royal family, as one

would naturally suppose they should, the dauphin and dauphiness, with their attendants, increased the establishment in the capacious palace of Versailles. Here, for society, they had the princesses, daughters of the king, the two brothers of the dauphin, and his two sisters, the ladies Clotilde and Elizabeth, who were still in the care of their governess, Madame de Marsan. Clotilde was afterwards married to the Prince of Piedmont, who became king of Sardinia. The gentle and affectionate Madame Elizabeth remained unmarried, and, as we shall see, was involved in the unhappy fate which overtook the royal family. Though living at Versailles, the dauphin and dauphiness kept scrupulously aloof from the worthless associates of the king. Their lives were untainted by the slightest indiscretion, and they took no part whatever in any public affairs. From the autocratic nature of the government, the dauphin, unfortunately, had no opportunity of gaining experience in the business of legislation, nor of exchanging ideas with public men on matters of importance to the community.

It was the privilege of princes of the blood to be members of the Parliament of Paris, and of the other parliaments which existed throughout the country. A contest, however, had arisen between the king and the Parliament of Paris in 1770, which resulted in the Parliament resolving not to register a certain royal edict, and, rather than do so, it closed its sittings. The king, by armed force, endeavoured to get the members individually to return to their duty. They still disobeyed, and the whole were banished to different towns and villages. The parliaments of Rouen, Besançon, Bordeaux, Aix, Toulouse, and Brittany taking part with the Parliament

of Paris, the whole of them were suppressed. Thus the only semblance of restraint on autocratic power disappeared, and had Louis, the dauphin, been so disposed, he could not have let his voice be heard in any public arena.

A ministry was formed under the Duke d'Aiguillon, every member of which was an enemy of the parliaments, and an object of popular detestation. Immersed in sensual indulgences and trifling amusements—daily widening the sphere of court demoralisation—the king was indifferent to the discontent of the people, and to the general misery which prevailed. When told of the ruin of the country, he only remarked that the monarchy would last his time. That time came to a close sooner than he expected. Early in May 1774, he was attacked by confluent small-pox of the worst kind, and lay in his apartment at Versailles nigh unto death. Madame du Barry and other depraved associates fled; and the daughters of the dying king, encountering the most fetid atmosphere, alone had the courage to attend upon him. Crowds of courtiers hovered about the palace, waiting to know the result. Sometimes they servilely came to the apartments of the dauphin and dauphiness to worship the rising sun. Then, on some slight intelligence that the king was reviving, they would rush back again, and leave the prince and princess to themselves.

Louis XV. at length died on the 10th May 1774. Madame Campan, in her Memoirs of Marie Antoinette, gives a graphic account of the scene on the occasion. 'The dauphin and dauphiness were together, expecting the intelligence of the death of the king. A dreadful noise, absolutely like thunder, was heard in the outer apartment: it was the crowd of courtiers who were

deserting the dead sovereign's ante-chamber, to come and bow to the new power of Louis XVI. This extraordinary tumult informed Marie Antoinette and her husband that they were to reign; and by a spontaneous movement, which deeply affected those around them, they threw themselves on their knees, and both, with emotion, exclaimed: "O God! guide us, protect us; we are too young to govern."'

## CHAPTER XI.

### LOUIS XVI.—1774 TILL MEETING OF THE STATES-GENERAL, 1789.

WHEN Louis XVI. ascended the throne by the death of his grandfather in 1774, he was twenty years of age, and Marie Antoinette, the queen, was one year younger. Neither was practically acquainted with public affairs. Louis had a somewhat bulky figure, but he possessed a pleasing countenance, was humane in disposition, and of unimpeachable morals. In his habits he was retiring and studious. He had been well educated, and was a proficient in Latin and English. He had a taste for mechanical pursuits, and, working at a private forge, he was a good locksmith. In all respects amiable, and economical in his expenditure, he would have adorned a private station; but, deficient in self-reliance and force of will, as well as practically unskilled in public policy, he was unfitted to encounter or to control the revolution about to burst on the country.

Although Marie Antoinette did all in her power to merit popular favour, she experienced a general dislike. There was a hatred of Austria, of which she came in for a share. About the court, she gave offence by trying to set aside or modify the excessive etiquette which kept

her in a state of perpetual thraldom. She was not allowed to put on a single article of attire with her own hands, or even without the intervention of a series of honorary servants, each of whom had a distinct duty. In dressing, one would take up the chemise, and hand it to another, who would put it on the queen. One would pour water on her hands; another would hold the towel wherewith to dry them. One had the right to put on the petticoat; another the gown. Gloves, shawls, head-dress were all subject to rules. Sitting, walking, riding, standing, all had their regulations; and visiting and receiving visits, even so much as speaking to any one, were matters of high concern. At table, dishes were presented as if to a divinity—the attendants humbly kneeling on a foot-stool. At much of this the queen laughed, and often protested, for which she gained not a little ill-will from a number of the courtiers.

These puerilities were significant of the frivolous manners and usages of the age. The formal costume of the reign of Louis XIV. still held sway. The philosophers who rapturously applauded the virtues of untutored nature, did not neglect to adorn their own persons with queues, hair-powder, frills, and shoe-buckles. Ladies were still enveloped in hoops; their coiffure, towering with feathers, was powdered and frizzled to an extraordinary height. Both sexes wore paint and patches on the face to heighten the complexion. The wearing of swords by civilians was a frequent subject of debate; to do so was alleged to be an exclusive privilege of the noblesse. The whole routine of affairs tended to accommodate and exalt this nominally superior order, and to depress the general population. The streets were unprovided with foot-ways, and pedestrians were

constantly exposed to danger from the carriages, which were driven from side to side at pleasure.

The assumptions of the noblesse, and the differences amongst them as to rank, were a fertile source of discord. There was an old noblesse and a new noblesse. There was a noblesse *de l'épée* (of the sword), and a noblesse *de la robe* (of the gown). The old noblesse affected to trace their origin to the great feudatories in the early days of the monarchy. Some of them still possessed estates, from which they drew rents; but many of them were patrimonially poor, and trusted to employment in the army, or to get small offices at court. It is true, there were antiquated laws to prevent the noblesse from engaging in trade. These laws, however, might easily have been set aside if there had been any anxious desire to do so. Except in Brittany, where there was less pride of birth, the noblesse would almost have died rather than betake themselves to any ordinary line of industry; but did not think it derogatory to make a living by keeping a gambling-house, or to hang about the court fulfilling such duties as handing a towel to the king, or helping him to pull on his coat.

The nobles of this ancient class were scandalised by the introduction into their order of families who, by the acquisition of wealth, had bought estates, and acquired patents of nobility. They looked down still more upon men who had been ennobled as statesmen, lawyers, and magistrates. These were the noblesse of the robe, *parvenus*, who should be taught to keep their proper distance. Beneath the whole in social estimation were the unprivileged orders—the *tiers-état*, or third estate—the plebeian multitude, which included professional men of different kinds—merchants, traders,

and artisans. The term *tiers-état* had, however, gone out of use, from the circumstance that the States-general was now a forgotten institution. It had become the custom for the noblesse to speak of all below them as *roturiers*. In the disquisitions on the history of the period, the phrase *roturier* is frequently employed. It is derived from *roture*, freshly broken-up land (Latin, *ruptura*), and strictly signified a labourer on the soil. In time, it came to be applied to all who wrought with their hands, and even, in a contemptuous sense, to all who followed any occupation requiring personal skill and diligence. The world, in short, was divided into two orders of human beings—noblesse and roturiers; a roturier being one who was only fit to pay taxes, which the noblesse might somehow contrive to live upon.

In these fantastic notions of the high noblesse may be recognised, not merely a mental weakness, but a great political blunder. This will be best understood by comparing the principles and practice of aristocracy in France and England. In France, the aristocratic order repelled the advances of those commoners who might be raised to an equality with them in rank. In England, on the contrary, the aristocratic order has ever been eminently absorptive, and cordially receives into its bosom all who, by fortune and the favour of the sovereign, are elevated to the peerage. In France, the noblesse had sunk to the condition of a caste useless in the body politic. Richelieu, in withdrawing them from their rural possessions, had assigned them nothing to do. They might get posts in the army, or at court, and fill the higher benefices in the church; that was all. As a consequence, matters of provincial administration were placed

in the hands of intendants and sub-intendants appointed by the king and his council of state. This species of centralisation had now existed two hundred and fifty years; the country was accustomed to it long before the Revolution, though it then assumed a permanently intensified form. Contrast this with the state of things in England, where the landed nobility and gentry perform a variety of duties to help on the business of the country, without so much as a thought of payment. They act as county magistrates, commissioners of supply, trustees of roads, members of police and prison boards, presidents of agricultural associations, and so forth. Besides residing less or more on their estates, and giving a dignity to local society, they take part in the work of legislation—the hereditary nobility in the House of Lords, their sons and other descendants emulous of being elected to the House of Commons.

The contrast may be advantageously carried still further. By the law of primogeniture, the younger members of the families of the aristocracy in England merge into the ordinary ranks of society; and the titled order is comparatively limited. In France, previous to the Revolution, all the members of the aristocratic families claimed to belong to the noblesse; and the number of the whole is said to have been above 150,000, who, by the industrious orders, were looked upon as so many drones, who lived upon and embarrassed the community. To men of genius and fortune of the so-called roturier class, the overbearing insolence of these titled idlers was peculiarly provoking, and engendered an animosity which afterwards led to scenes of outrage.

A similar grudge was entertained against the higher order of the clergy, who were all connected with the

noblesse, and enjoyed privileges as regards taxation which threw additional burdens on the general community. The church was on an extravagant footing. It comprehended 18 archbishops, 110 bishops, 5500 canons; upwards of 1400 abbeys, priories, and nunneries; and 35,000 parish priests or curés. The annual income of the whole amounted to 130,000,000 livres, or £5,154,639 sterling. Two-thirds of all the land in the country belonged to the noblesse and the clergy, and both were exempted from several direct taxes. Unitedly, their exemptions are said to have amounted to about £7,000,000 per annum.

The system of taxation was to the last degree odious. The various imposts were not levied by collectors appointed by the government, but by a privileged association, the members of which were styled farmers-general, whose functions resembled those of the Roman *publicans* mentioned in Scripture. The association leased the taxes for a certain sum annually, and all that was gathered over this stipulated amount was profit, and paid the expenses of collection. At one period, the leasing was matter of public competition; but latterly, the members of the association, sixty in number, were selected by the minister of finance—his choice being regulated by the amount of bribe or present which was offered to him. Generally, shares in the concern were assigned by the king to his favourites, male and female. The collection from the unhappy tax-payers was made with relentless severity, in order to swell the amount of profit; and the excess of what was gathered by these farmers-general over what they paid into the treasury was enormous.

The taxes on land were of various denominations,

the principal being the *vingtièmes* and *taille*, producing nearly £6,000,000. Of all the taxes on consumption, that which pressed most cruelly on the poor was the *gabelle*, or salt-tax, which altogether amounted to £2,562,000 per annum. The impost varied in different provinces. Those that were most heavily taxed were called *pays de grande gabelle*, and those that were least heavily taxed were called *pays de petite gabelle*. This inequality led to smuggling from one province to another, for which contraband trade, dogs were trained to carry small parcels of salt, tied round their neck, by lonely paths across the frontiers during night. The gabelle, both small and great, was a source of extreme discontent, and helped materially to bring on the Revolution.

In some districts, great distress was experienced by farmers and peasants from the *corvées*, or obligations to labour compulsorily on the roads, bridges, or other public works, for certain or uncertain periods, without payment. There were heavy complaints on this score, which were disregarded, although there were instances of all the farmers in a district being utterly ruined by this species of tyranny. The petty feudal burdens imposed on the land in various districts were almost endless in number, and caused incessant irritation. Worst of all, large tracts of country were constituted *capitaineries* by the king, in favour of princes of the blood and others, irrespective of all private rights. A capitainerie was, properly speaking, a game preserve. In it droves of wild-boars and herds of deer might roam at pleasure, and any one who presumed to obstruct or kill them, to save food for his family, was liable to be sent to the galleys. The picture of rural wretchedness is completed by the fact, that among the peasantry there

were 150,000 serfs who had no rights whatever, but were bought and sold with the land on which they were born.

If kings, nobility, and clergy were, as is thought, accountable for bringing society into this defective and perilous condition, can we, with any regard to justice, hold the roturier class excusable? Seigneurs might oppress the peasantry, but the trade guilds were equally tyrannical by their restrictions on the freedom of labour. Dearths occurred as frequently from false notions of political economy based on selfishness, as from natural causes. Up even to the Revolution, there were demands that the transport of corn from one province to another should be prohibited.

Nothing in town or country appears to have been done with a view to the common welfare. The nation was a jumble of selfish interests, hatreds, and jealousies, ever ready to burst like an explosive chemical compound. Colbert endeavoured to remedy many of the gross abuses in trade and commerce; and with what gratitude was he rewarded? At his decease, his funeral was only saved from popular outrage by a military escort. There had occasionally been exasperating discussions on the constitution; there had been armed violence in the streets, insurrections, and murder; but we have not, in the whole history of the French, from the reign of Hugh Capet, anything like a calm consideration of the political circumstances of the country. Everything takes place by fits and starts. There is an ebullition, and, for the time, it is all over. A fresh novelty sends the national mind into a new direction. It is not a little unjust for historians to accumulate reproaches exclusively on the noblesse and the church,

or on this or that minister. Without extenuating their errors and follies—but rather holding them up to reprobation—there can be no reasonable doubt that the roturiers were themselves greatly to blame for the bitter misfortunes which fell upon France.

The crimes, errors, follies of a thousand years, like a long run up and unpaid bill, now confronted Louis XVI., who was wholly guiltless of any political or moral misdemeanour. He was, however, afforded an opportunity of redressing, as far as in his power, the grievances under which the country was suffering. From what has been above stated, France undoubtedly had good reason to ask for various administrative and constitutional reforms, deserving the most earnest attention of any one charged with the high responsibilities of a sovereign. The inequality of taxation, the method of extorting taxes by farmers-general, the gabelle, the corvées, the feudal burdens, the capitaineries, the existence of serfdom, and the narrow policy connected with trade and commerce, were all matters to be gravely considered and redressed. No doubt there were practical difficulties in the way, but we have no evidence that Louis XVI. took any trouble to look into and realise the perilous state of affairs, with a view to some great and conciliatory act of reform. He amused himself in hunting, or making locks, when he might have been devising means to satisfy such demands of his people as were at all reasonable.

At this time there was no want of clever men with a talent for conversation and the expounding of theories. The Palais-Royal swarmed with orators who would have undertaken to remodel the universe. The only scarcity were men of practical understanding who could

assist the king in his difficulties; but, as we shall immediately see, when he was so fortunate as to get ministers of this stamp, he had not the art to keep them. He was unfortunate, or, more correctly speaking, careless in his first choice of a prime-minister. He selected an old courtier, named Maurepas, under whom were Malesherbes and Turgot, with some others of lesser ability. Malesherbes was an eminent lawyer, and of upright principles. Turgot, equally honest, possessed advanced views of political economy, with a knowledge of finance, and, as has been mentioned, sagaciously foresaw what was likely to be the fate of the nation. Soon the young king experienced the troubles of sovereignty.

The Parliament of Paris had been dispersed by Louis XV. for its contempt of the royal authority. Louis XVI. was now urged to recall that body, and the ministry joining in the request, the Parliament was restored to its functions. It was a popular act, but attended with such consequences as might have been anticipated from establishing a power determined to thwart every fiscal measure which it capriciously thought objectionable. No opposition was offered to the remission of the most odious taxes; but when Turgot proposed that the noblesse and the clergy should contribute to the revenue of the country in the same proportion as the roturiers, he met with the most determined opposition.

While he was in office, this able minister effected several reforms, notwithstanding the powers arrayed against him. He lessened the public debt, and aimed at making the revenue cover the expenditure; and it is matter for sincere regret that he was not encouraged to proceed in his designs to extirpate the abuses which

obstructed the material prosperity of the country. Malesherbes was not more successful in furthering measures connected with his department. Mortified and offended, both ministers resigned; Malesherbes in March, and Turgot in April, 1776. Maurepas now introduced Necker, and he became director-general of the finances. He was by birth a Swiss; was able, honest, generous in disposition; but as a public man, he rendered himself ridiculous by his inordinate vanity, and was dangerous as an adviser, for he cherished those extravagant notions respecting social regeneration, which had been heedlessly promulgated by the Economists.

At this time, England was in the midst of its unfortunate contest with the American colonies. The French, unmindful of the disordered state of the finances, and thinking this a favourable opportunity to take a revenge for Wolfe's victory at Quebec, as well as for damaging British interests, entered into a treaty, offensive and defensive, with the colonists; and a war with England immediately followed, 1778. This uncalled-for war was greatly against the wish of Louis XVI. He had to yield to the outburst of enthusiasm which affected all classes; French forces were sent to America, accompanied by the Marquis Lafayette, Count de Rochambeau, and other generals. The war with England lasted five years, during which the British naval forces, under Howe and Rodney, against the combined fleets of France and Spain, gained the most brilliant successes. The crowning triumph of the British arms was the successful defence of Gibraltar, by General Elliot, during a siege of three years, seven months, and twelve days. The attempts to capture the fortress by a bombardment from floating batteries were

completely baffled; the batteries were destroyed by red-hot shot; and the poor fellows who had manned them were, while struggling in the water, humanely rescued by Brigadier Curtis and a devoted band of followers. The siege was brought to a close on the termination of hostilities by the peace of Versailles, 20th January 1783; the first to compliment General Elliot on his gallant defence being the French commander, the Duke de Crillon.

The war added prodigiously to the financial embarrassments of France. There was no other resource but borrowing; the hopeless political condition of affairs being at the same time aggravated by admiration of those republican principles which had been spread by the American contest. Lafayette became the object of extravagant eulogy, and the fermentation reached an extraordinary height when the celebrated Benjamin Franklin arrived in Paris as a commissioner plenipotentiary from the United States. Madame Campan gives a lively picture of the reception given to Franklin. 'He appeared at court,' she says, 'in the costume of an American farmer: his lank unpowdered hair, round hat, and drab coat, contrasted oddly with the embroidered and bespangled dresses, the full-blown and perfumed perukes, of the courtiers of Versailles. This novelty charmed the dizzy heads of all the French women. Elegant fêtes were given in honour of one who united the distinction of a great natural philosopher with the patriotic virtues which had prompted him to embrace the noble part of an apostle of liberty. I was present at one of these fêtes, in which the most beautiful of three hundred women was selected to affix on the gray hairs of the American philosopher a crown of laurel, and on

his cheeks a couple of kisses. Even in the palace of Versailles, at the exhibition of Sèvres porcelain, under the very eyes of the king, a medallion of Franklin was sold bearing this inscription: "*Eripuit cœlo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis*" ("He tore the thunderbolt from the skies, and the sceptre from tyrants").'

Driven to desperation by the state of the finances, Necker tried economy. As in the case of Turgot, he was assailed by all who flourish on abuses. He felt affronted, and resigned, May 1781. Maurepas died the same year, and M. de Vergennes was appointed his successor. This was a minister of superior ability, but he was distracted on all hands for want of funds to carry on the public business. A young financier, D'Ormesson, was brought to his aid; he failed in his attempts, and his place was filled with Calonne, a bold, ambitious man, who tried an entirely new policy, which consisted in spending money on large public works, in order to give a grand idea of national prosperity, and sustain public credit. One of his undertakings was that of commencing the magnificent harbours and breakwater at Cherbourg. All these ingenious schemes were unavailing, and Calonne had candidly to tell Louis XVI. that he could see no means to make the revenue cover the expenditure, unless the privileged orders would submit to an equitable system of taxation; and, to induce them to do so, he suggested the assembling of the Notables.

The Notables, 137 in number, besides seven royal princes, were chiefly of the privileged classes—titled peers, noblesse, high clergy, and presidents of parliament. They met 22d February 1787, when Calonne laid a faithful financial statement before them, and, in

eloquent terms, implored them to save the country from bankruptcy by assenting to his proposed method of taxation. He encountered violent opposition. The correctness of his statements was challenged. All were against him—the noblesse and clergy, because they would not be taxed in the same proportion as others; and the roturiers and populace generally, because they disliked being told how much of the national debt had been incurred for wars into which they had impelled the country. Before going farther, it will be interesting to know something definite respecting the state of the finances, at or shortly after the disclosures of Calonne, for on this almost everything turns.

In round numbers, the national debt amounted to £240,000,000 sterling, the annual interest on which was £10,000,000. The annual expenditure, including payment of interest, was £26,400,000. The annual income was £18,800,000. The annual deficit, accordingly, was £7,600,000. One year with another, and making some allowance for an expected improvement in public credit and increase in the revenue, Calonne was satisfied that an addition for only a few years of £6,000,000 per annum would rectify affairs. Can it be believed that France was unable to undertake this additional obligation? At this period, the population was 26,000,000. Agriculture was certainly backward, and the farmers poor; but several large and thriving towns had sprung up; manufactures were extending. There was a large fleet of vessels engaged in commerce. To St Domingo alone, a valuable possession in the West Indies, there were annual exports amounting to £10,000,000. And the whole of these elements of prosperity, and many more that we have

not space to enumerate, were to be jeopardised, society convulsed, and the monarchy destroyed, for lack of an additional revenue of £6,000,000 per annum, which the country, by judicious arrangements, was perfectly able to pay! Was ever a great nation ruined from a cause so pitiable?

Vergennes died in February 1787, and was succeeded by Montmorin. Calonne was paid for his candour by being dismissed. His place was filled by a man of worthless character, Brienne, archbishop of Toulouse, who was raised to be president of the council. He was as unable as Calonne to bring the Notables to reason, and the assembly of that body was closed 25th May 1787. Brienne had only one course left; it was, to issue arbitrary edicts of taxation, and get them registered by the Parliament. He sent an edict imposing an additional stamp-duty. It was rejected thrice, on the ground that the tax would require the sanction of the States-general. An edict to equalise the taxes on land shared the same fate. Resolved to vindicate the king's authority, the minister, by royal edict, exiled the Parliament to Troyes, and thither was despatched the Count d'Artois to hold a bed of justice and enforce the registration. The edicts were registered, but under protest, 22d August 1787. Shortly afterwards, the Parliament returned to Paris, and, by a compromise, the enforced edicts were withdrawn, and one authorising equality of taxation on land, registered in their place.

This state of concord was very brief. To relieve pressing necessities, Brienne proposed to borrow £17,000,000; and, on submitting an edict for the purpose, the Parliament peremptorily refused its registration. There was now a distinct collision with the royal

authority. D'Espremenil and Goislard de Montsabert, two councillors who led the opposition, were seized, the former being banished to St Marguerite, an island near Hières, and the latter conducted to Pierre Encise. To allay the public fermentation, the king, in May 1788, assembled the Parliament at Versailles, and, expressing his extreme regret for having been obliged to resort to measures of severity, pointed out the necessity for providing funds to carry on the government. He then, in a bed of justice, caused six edicts to be registered, enforcing a number of changes in connection with the Parliament of Paris, and the various provincial courts. One of these edicts related to the establishment of a new court, to be called the *Cour Plénière*, which was to exercise the political power of the parliaments; another, by the erection of new judicial tribunals in different towns and districts, lessened the jurisdiction of the parliaments, particularly that of Paris—reserving only to these bodies the decision of criminal cases affecting the privileged classes, and the determination of civil processes above a certain fixed amount.

Instead of allaying the public excitement, these proceedings produced a universal storm of indignation. To shew their sympathy with the Parliament of Paris, all the other parliaments suspended their sittings, and meetings took place in different parts of the country, at which oaths were taken to withstand the innovations. In various towns there were serious disturbances, and symptoms of insubordination were observable in several regiments. All classes cried for the meeting of the States-general, for that alone would satisfy the country. The king felt the struggle to be hopeless against a nation almost in open insurrection. On the 8th August

1788, he issued an edict convoking the States-general on the 1st May 1789.

The interval that elapsed till this memorable meeting, was one of wild commotion. Paris was agitated with the most extravagant anticipations of what would be effected by the tiers-état. The Parliament, while courting popularity, began to feel some degree of alarm that it had perhaps gone too far, and might perish in the hurricane it had provoked. The cash in the treasury not being equal to more than a single day's expenditure, Brienne paid the national creditors with paper-money. So loud was now the outcry against him, that he was dismissed, and Necker was brought back to power; and such was the faith in his financial ability, that the national credit immediately revived. Two very important matters required consideration—first, the constitution of the States-general; and, second, whether the method of voting should be by the noblesse and clergy and the tiers-état in separate bodies, or by the whole collectively. The Notables met, 3d November 1788, and, through the persuasions of Necker, decreed that the entire number of members in the States-general was to be at least a thousand, and that of these the members of the tiers-état should be equal in number to the noblesse and clergy united. Scarcely any restriction was imposed as regarded the suffrage. All men above twenty-five years of age were to be eligible as electors or deputies. Neither was there any obligation imposed as to deliberating separately or collectively.

Amidst the whirl of passionate discussion, Louis XVI., though of placid temperament, was greatly troubled. When attending the funeral of his minister,

Vergennes, he said mournfully that he wished it had been his fate to lie down beside him. The queen was equally alarmed at the threatening aspect of affairs. She had three children, two sons and a daughter, and felt the anxieties of a mother. Within a few years, a change had come over the gay society of Paris. The salons were crowded with politicians of both sexes, broaching the most fanciful theories of social reorganisation. A kind of political millennium was expected. Crime and injustice were to disappear from the earth. There was a rage for republican simplicity, along with an admiration of English constitutional usages and English attire. Round hats and top-boots became fashionable, and there was even the daring innovation of wearing shoes with ties instead of buckles. Some ladies of a masculine turn of mind dismissed hair-powder, and let their locks fall in natural tresses.

As if fate had determined to leave nothing undone to produce disorder, it gave to the world a man who, with means and opportunities, set himself to destroy the monarchy, and to exalt himself on its ruins. We allude to Louis-Philippe, Duke of Orleans, great-grandson of the Regent Orleans. By the death of his father in 1785, he inherited domains and palaces with a princely revenue; and this patrimony was so enormously increased by his marriage with the daughter of the Duke of Penthièvre, that his annual income reached nearly half a million sterling. The richest man in France, he was also the most dissolute and unscrupulous. Aiming at the subversion of the reigning branch of the Bourbons, and so rising to power, he threw himself into the hands of the growing popular party, among whom, by subsidies in money and the coarsest revelries, he

expected to accomplish his treacherous purposes. Under his inspiration, malign scandals were fabricated regarding the queen and royal family, plots were hatched to undermine the government, and insurrectionary excesses covertly promoted in the capital.

Though immersed in profligacies, the duke, in his early married life, had not neglected the education of his children, over whom he appointed, as governor and instructress, Madame de Genlis, well known for her numerous literary productions. One of her pupils was the duke's eldest son, who, as Duke de Chartres, took some part in the revolutionary troubles, and ultimately rose to temporary distinction as Louis-Philippe, king of the French.

Notwithstanding the general fervour, the elections for the States-general went off quietly. The members of the tiers-état were almost wholly in the democratic interest; a few of the nobles, including the Duke of Orleans, and a considerable number of the inferior clergy, were similarly so. It was clear that, if the plan of deliberating and voting in one body was to be adopted, there would be such a preponderance in favour of the views of the tiers-état as to overwhelm the other orders.

## CHAPTER XII.

### LOUIS XVI.—THE REVOLUTION, MAY TILL OCTOBER 1789.

THE States-general convoked for the 1st May 1789, met, after some preliminary ceremonies, on the 5th of that month. Its place of assemblage was a spacious hall prepared for the purpose in Versailles. The number of members was upwards of eleven hundred. There was a vast concourse on the occasion. At one end of the hall was a throne for the king, with seats for the queen, the princes, princesses, and the councillors of state. The clergy had seats on the right, the nobles on the left, and the tiers-état sat in front. The fittings of the hall were magnificent. The public, among whom were ladies of rank, were accommodated in galleries, where they could overlook the proceedings. There was nothing wanting to complete the dramatic effect. The speech from the throne was listened to with respect, and no one, from appearances, could have imagined that the assemblage was the beginning of the Revolution.

Business was postponed till next day; and then commenced the tug of war, which was almost inevitable in the circumstances. Let us rightly understand why so momentous a meeting should have broken into discord. Neither the king, as the ruling authority, nor the Notables, had prescribed any proper rules of procedure. It was not settled whether the whole body of members

should deliberate and vote collectively, or that the orders should do so in separate chambers. There was a still greater defect. The States-general, which had not met since 1615, had never been what, in England, is understood by a legislative body. It was a gathering of persons of different orders, who were deputed by constituencies to present lists of complaints, which, after being debated on, formed the basis of petitions to the king, who was the real legislator. These lists of complaints and suggestions were called *cahiers*, a term signifying a small pamphlet (Latin, *codicarium*, a little book). In other words, the States-general was traditionally little else than a channel through which public grievances and wants were made known to the sovereign, with a view to his legislating on the subject. The revival of a body possessing so imperfect a constitution, unaccompanied with powers adapted to enlightened views of legislation, and distinct regulations for its guidance, could scarcely fail to be disastrous, in a country unskilled in those parliamentary forms which are traceable, through long ages in England, to the witenagemots of an Anglo-Saxon ancestry. Everything, by the fatal neglect, or overweening confidence of Necker, appears to have been left to chance. Even no provision was made for verifying the elections previous to assembling. The members took their seats before it was absolutely established that they had a right to be present.

On this occasion, the tiers-état had been furnished with cahiers, demanding, among other things, perfect equality with the noblesse and clergy, which these orders were resolved to resist. Of nobles and clergy there were 563, and of tiers-état 567. About half the tiers-état were needy provincial attorneys; the remainder

were chiefly merchants and farmers; and there were few men of independent means.

The more noted members embraced in the three orders were the Count Mirabeau, a man of robust frame, dissolute in habits, poor from his extravagances, devoid of principle, and of great oratorical powers; the Marquis de Lafayette, indecisive, with a mania for republicanism; M. Bailly, respected for his scientific attainments and uprightness of character, and who possessed high hopes of political rectification; Clermont Tonnerre, Lally Tollendal, Alexander and Charles Lameth, Barnave, and Talleyrand, bishop of Autun. There were others, who subsequently became prominent, including Robespierre, Sieyès, Pétion, and D'Espremenil, the last having returned from banishment.

The verification of the elections was the first business taken up; but the noblesse and clergy having gone to sit apart, the tiers-état declined to proceed until they returned to form part of the united body. After a miserable contest on this point, which lasted several weeks, the tiers-état, with a confidence sustained by the general clamour in their favour, assumed the power to act as if it embraced the whole members. It appointed Bailly president, and constituted itself the National Assembly, without any authority but its own will. The excitement in Paris was intense. The presses teemed with political pamphlets extolling the tiers-état, and the cafés in the Palais-Royal were thronged with orators who, with violent gesticulations, addressed multitudes of enraptured listeners.

Arthur Young, an eminent English agriculturist, was at this time travelling in France, and has left an account of what came under his observation in Paris and

Versailles during the meeting of the Assembly. What considerably astonished this unpoetical native of Suffolk was the disorderly way in which business was conducted. In the Assembly, he says, the spectators in the galleries 'were allowed to interfere with the debates by clapping their hands, and other noisy expressions of approbation that were grossly indecent.' There was likewise a want of decorum among the members. 'More than once there were a hundred members on their legs at a time, and M. Bailly absolutely without power to keep order;' all which, he adds, was caused by the want of rules of debate, and 'appears preposterous.' This disorderly procedure, however, was not singular; for, on attending a meeting of the Royal Society of Agriculture in Paris, he says: 'When they discuss or debate, there is no order, but all speak together.' Young's conclusions on the state of affairs are summed up in a few words: 'Everything conspires to render the present period in France critical.'

The period was no doubt critical: there was a dearth of food; insurrections broke out in various parts of the country; bands of brigands began to levy contributions; the government seemed powerless. Mortified at the turn things were taking, Necker wished to resign. Now was the time for the king to have shewn any sagacity and decision of character. At the instigation of the Count d'Artois, he committed the blunder of attempting to coerce the Assembly, without the power to cause his orders to be executed. He issued a proclamation suspending the meetings of the States-general until the 22d June, when he would hold a sitting, till which time the hall would be closed. On the 20th, the tiers-état, finding the doors shut and guarded by soldiers,

adjourned to a hall used as a royal tennis-court (*jeu de paume*), and there took an oath never to separate until they organised a constitution for the kingdom. Confounded by this procedure, the court postponed the royal sitting till the 23d. Turned out of the tennis-court, the tiers-état found an asylum in a church, and here the members were joined by the majority of the clergy amidst transports of enthusiasm.

On the 23d, all attended the royal sitting, to hear what were the king's intentions. He spoke indiscreetly, considering the weakness of his authority. He offered to make no changes in the constitution, nor did he speak of the vast abuses which stood in need of redress; and concluded by commanding the members to deliberate separately, according to their respective orders, the following day; meanwhile they would dismiss. The harangue amounted to a species of defiance, and obviously threw the duty of carrying out measures of constitutional and administrative reform into the hands of a set of generally well-meaning, but inexperienced and audacious zealots. The king having retired, his master of the ceremonies repeated the orders for dismissal. 'Go, tell your master,' exclaimed Mirabeau, 'that we are here by the command of the people, and will not leave unless compelled at the point of the bayonet.' The utterance of this discourteous language shewed the depth to which the royal authority had fallen.

Next day, besides the majority of the clergy, forty-seven of the nobility joined the tiers-état. Further resistance was useless. The king exhorted all who stood out to relinquish the contest, acting on which advice, the whole joined the Assembly on the 27th. We may pity the humiliation of the ministry; but was

not their want of foresight, in not laying down some rules of procedure beforehand, very much like the conduct of children? The neglect settled the fate of the monarchy. In the petty war of forms, the tiers-état was triumphant, and all that took place afterwards was a hurried course downward. The democratic rejoicings were boundless. Dreading outrage, or for the purpose of overawing the Assembly, troops, including Swiss and German regiments in French pay, were drawn around Versailles. Necker, the prime source of mismanagement, was dismissed, and ordered immediately to quit the kingdom, 11th July.

Necker's dismissal threw Paris into a paroxysm of rebellion. The French Guards and some other regiments fraternised with the mob. There was fighting with bloodshed in the streets. Several prisons were broken open and felons liberated. On the 12th and 13th, the commotion continued. The Hôtel-de-Ville became the focus of an insurrectionary power; or, in plain terms, the civic magistracy, which was bound to preserve the peace, sided with the party of disorder—a circumstance in itself shewing the rottenness of the whole system. In this civic saturnalia, the old white flag of the French monarchy was dismissed, and a drapeau of red, white, and blue stripes—the now well-known tricolour—adopted. A militia styled the Burgher, but afterwards the National Guard, was organised. There was a universal demand for arms, to supply which the Hôtel des Invalides was pillaged.

Provided with weapons of different kinds, the cry was 'To the Bastille, to the Bastille!' This massive fortress, which had long been obnoxious to popular vengeance, was attacked on the morning of the 14th July by a

raging multitude. It was stoutly defended, and held out until the French Guards, about two o'clock in the afternoon, brought artillery to bear on the gates. The governor and garrison surrendered on a guarantee of their lives, which was wholly disregarded. On the mob bursting in, there was a general slaughter. All the prisoners, seven in number, were liberated. Flesselles, the mayor of Paris, being suspected of having counselled the governor to resistance, was wantonly murdered, and his head paraded through the streets on a pike.

When intelligence of the revolt reached Versailles, late at night, the court was in consternation, the Assembly much excited. Repentant and abased, and willing to forget past differences, Louis next day went unceremoniously on foot to the Assembly, and, asking the members to co-operate with him in preserving order, was received with shouts of applause. A deputation was appointed to accompany him to Paris. Bailly was appointed mayor in place of Flesselles, and Lafayette placed in command of the Burgher Guard. On the 17th, the king, accompanied by the deputation, visited Paris. He was received with some demonstrations of loyalty at the Hôtel, and returned in safety to Versailles. To appease popular clamour, Necker was recalled.

In the course of these commotions, the royal family suffered a domestic affliction. The dauphin, a child eight years of age, died after a lingering illness. There were now only a boy and girl left, and these till the last remained the solace of their parents.

The assertion of independence by the Assembly was an example followed by the Parisians, who framed a representative system from sixty-one districts of the city to constitute a *Commune*, the more immediate duty

of which was to procure supplies of food during the great scarcity which prevailed. The preservation of anything like order depended on Bailly and Lafayette, assisted by the Burgher Guard. In spite of their efforts, the populace broke again into insurrection, and horrible outrages were committed. Foulon, who had succeeded Necker as minister of finance, happening to be seen in Paris, a cry was got up that he had been heard to say that the people should be made to eat hay. On this mischievous calumny, he was seized and hanged, his body dragged through the streets, and, finally, his heart was torn out, and carried about on the point of a sword.

On the 4th August, a most extraordinary and unexpected scene took place in the Assembly. Moved by orations from the Viscount de Noailles and the Duke d'Aiguillon, the members of all the orders were affected with a delirious impulse to relinquish their individual privileges. All those who by perverse selfishness had led to the Revolution now vied with each other in liberality. The nobles gave up their seigneurial rights; the clergy relinquished tithes, pluralities, and fees; and the tiers-état surrendered the privileges of towns and provinces. A proposal of the archbishop of Paris to celebrate a *Te Deum*, and a motion to designate Louis XVI. the restorer of French liberty, were agreed to in a fit of enthusiasm. All the decrees were assented to by the king, and promulgated as laws. One night had seen the overthrow of usages a thousand years old. Shortly afterwards, the leading principles of the constitution were agreed on—France to be a constitutional monarchy, an assembly to make the laws, on which the king was entitled to exercise a veto during a period limited to two sessions.

The Assembly was now apparently the dominant body in the state. But there had already sprung up an irregular power, greater than that of the Assembly, and before which all had to bow—the power of the mob. The self-constituted Commune of Paris, secretly inspired by the Duke of Orleans, had become, so to speak, the engine which worked the Revolution. As if that were not enough, political clubs began to be established for the purpose of keeping up a constant insurrectionary stimulus. In the short interval between May and September 1789, the spirit of revolution had gained a strength which no constituted authority, if so inclined, was competent to quell.

The limited right of veto indulgently left to the king, gave displeasure to the Parisian populace, and produced much excitement. While the agitation was at its height, the officers of the king's body-guards gave an evening entertainment at the palace of Versailles, 23d September, and the king and queen having given their presence for a short time, were received with loud demonstrations of loyalty. It was alleged that white cockades were distributed by ladies to the soldiers, and that a tricolour cockade was trampled under foot with studied indignity. A display of a similar character took place on the 3d October. In Paris, the indignation was boundless; a spark was only wanting to produce an explosion. On the morning of the 5th, a young virago began the insurrection by beating a drum, and shouting for bread, bread! An infuriated rabble attacked the Hôtel-de-Ville, which was with difficulty saved from destruction; and the next movement was to Versailles, which was reached in the afternoon.

Great was the consternation on the appearance of

armed mobs of men and women in the town. They rushed with piercing cries into the midst of the Assembly, and marching to the palace, were prevented from wreaking their vengeance on the royal family, only by some timely courtesies from the king and queen. During the night the public-houses were crowded with the rioters. Next morning, Lafayette, who had command of the National Guard, which he had brought from Paris for the preservation of order, failed in protecting the palace from outrage. The mob burst in the doors, and seeking out the apartments of the queen, several murders were committed. Fortunately, by the interference of the gardes-du-corps, who appeased the insurgents, no personal violence was perpetrated on the royal family; but the cry 'To Paris!' arose, and the king and queen, with their children, were obliged to obey the command. With shouts and revolutionary songs, the mob escorted the royal family along the road to Paris, the savagery of the whole scene being aggravated by a party of ruffians carrying on pikes two heads of soldiers in the body-guard, killed at the assault on the palace. By a refinement of ferocity, the monsters stopped at Sèvres to cause a hairdresser to curl and powder the disordered locks of the two heads, which were borne aloft in front of the royal carriage.

Shortly after the court had been established at the Tuileries, the Assembly moved to Paris—a fatal move, for the members were now liable to be overawed by popular intimidation. A political club called the Club Bréton, which had been formed at Versailles, consisting of the more revolutionary members of the States-general, now also removed to the capital, and holding its meetings in the hall of a former Jacobin convent, received

the name of the Jacobin Club. Soon it incorporated as members all the more violent of the democratic party in Paris, and established twelve hundred affiliated societies throughout France. From this club came the term Jacobin, signifying a republican of an extreme type. Opposed to it was the club of the Feuillants, consisting of the friends of the constitution, and taking their name from the order of the Feuillants, in whose hall they met. The club of the Cordeliers, also taking its name from the hall of a monastery, was in character not greatly different from that of the Jacobins, but did not attain to such gigantic power. The mischief wrought by these clubs, especially that of the Jacobins, afforded a striking testimony of the dangerous character of voluntary and irresponsible associations, which assume the privilege of sitting in judgment on, and overawing constituted authorities. What with the Commune and the Jacobin Club, and behind all, the anarchists armed with pikes, who throve on plunder, and were ready to commit the most foul outrages for a few francs a day, anything like regular government was at an end. The National Guard, which had its origin in Paris, was extended over the country as a species of armed police, professedly to protect life and property; but as this civic soldiery often acted according to its political bias, and fraternised with the mob, it could not be thoroughly reckoned on for the preservation of order.

Excited by local clubs, as well as by recollections of feudal oppressions, the peasantry in various districts assembled in bands, and attacked the châteaux of noblesse and seigneurs, which they sacked and burned. In some instances whole families were massacred. Desiring to possess the land, these rural mobs searched for the

title-deeds of property, and when they failed to find them, they put the proprietors whom they seized to the most frightful tortures, to compel them to disclose the place of concealment. Many churches and convents shared the fate of the châteaux. The Assembly affected to deplore these disorders, but took no active measures to abate them, being secretly pleased that the atrocities would intimidate all who continued to doubt the propriety of the Revolution.

Against these insurrectionary movements, the higher classes made no head. Yielding to panic fear, they fled in great numbers from the country, instead of remaining to exert their influence for the preservation of peace and order. About the time that Louis XVI. was brought with his family to Paris, he was deserted by those whose duty was to rally round the throne. First went off his youngest brother, the Count d'Artois, the Prince of Condé, Duke de Polignac, Marshal de Broglie, M. de Breteuil, prime-minister, and several others. And shortly afterwards followed his brother Monsieur, Count de Provence, the Prince de Bourbon, Duke d'Enghien, and Duke de Luxembourg. Even D'Espremenil—he who was an instigator of rebellion in the Parliament—ran away, but was caught, and brought back to the Assembly. Such was the beginning of that emigration of high and middle class to Germany and England, which helped materially to aggravate the revolutionary troubles; and for long afterwards, emigrant noblesse, who had hitherto disdained to follow any honourable line of industry, might have been seen depending on charity, or labouring at humble employments in London for their daily bread.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### LOUIS XVI.—REVOLUTION CONTINUED, OCTOBER 1789 TO SEPTEMBER 1792.

ACCORDING to ordinary historians, the arrival of the king in the palace of the Tuileries gave much satisfaction to the Parisians; but, from the account of Arthur Young, the change could not be very agreeable to the royal family, who were watched as if they had been criminals. He tells us, that when walking in the gardens of the palace, the king was accompanied by six grenadiers. The queen was similarly attended, and did not appear to be in health. There was 'a little garden railed off, for the dauphin to amuse himself in, and a small room built in it to retire to in case of rain; here he was at work with his little hoe and rake, but not without a guard or two of grenadiers. He is a very pretty good-natured-looking boy of five or six years old, with an agreeable countenance; wherever he goes, all hats are taken off to him, which I was glad to observe. All the family being kept thus close prisoners, for such they are in effect, affords at first view a shocking spectacle.' In the privacy of the palace, the queen occupied herself in the education of her two children.

On coming to Paris, the Assembly held its sittings in the palace of the archbishop, from which it speedily

removed to the large hall of a riding-school, situated between the Tuileries and the Palais-Royal (now an open space traversed by the Rue Rivoli). Among the earliest proceedings at this place of meeting, was that of remodelling the system of local government in France. The old provinces, with their intendants and antiquated usages, were abolished. The country was divided into departments, respectively named from some leading natural feature. Each department was divided into districts, and the districts into cantons. The appointment of departmental councils, along with a graduated ramification of officials, was assigned to electors on a popular basis; it being declared that henceforth the people were the only legitimate source of power. The government of towns was in a similar manner provided for. About the same time (December 1789), a proposal of Dr Guillotin was adopted for altering the form of capital punishment into that for beheading by a machine which has since been called by his name, and soon obtained an infamous notoriety.

The clergy next received some attention. They had obstinately refused to bear their fair share of taxation, and were now to experience the consequences. Necker, as unable as ever to recover the finances, brought the extent of the deficiency before the Assembly, and, as the easiest method of providing funds, it was resolved, on the recommendation of Talleyrand, to take and sell the whole of the church property, which was valued at £80,000,000. Loud, but vain, were the remonstrances of the clergy. Their property was sequestrated, and they were reduced to the critical position of being stipendiaries with moderate incomes dependent on the state. In France, there has at all times been an insane

desire to possess and occupy land. The estates belonging to the church readily found purchasers among those who had any money at disposal. In order to effect sales with greater expedition, the plan was adopted of issuing a species of notes, called assignats, of which a certain amount would be received in the purchases. Assignats were afterwards issued in such profusion that they soon suffered a great depreciation. The end in view was, however, gained. The vast domains of not only the clergy, but of many other proprietors which were seized, were broken up into small portions among a humble class of proprietors; and, by its repeated creations of assignats, the revolutionary government was enabled to sustain itself in all its difficulties. These measures of spoliation were followed by the abrogation of all the provincial parliaments, the establishment of trial by jury, and the organisation of a supreme criminal court of appeal at Paris, styled the Court of Cassation (May 1790).

As the members of the States-general had been elected only for a year, their term of office had now expired, and, legally, it was their duty to quit office. That, for reasons satisfactory to themselves, they declined to do. They had, without warrant, assumed the functions of a Constituent Assembly; and now they maintained their right to continue their labours until they had completed the framework of the constitution. While thus unauthorisedly continuing their session, they, on the 20th June 1790, abolished the order of nobility, and announced that in future men were to possess no other distinction than that 'arising from their virtues.' Even the terms *monsieur* and *madame* were discontinued. Every man was addressed as *citizen*, and every woman

as *citoyenne.* There was a singular blending of frivolity with bold comprehensive measures of national import. The destruction of the Bastille being deemed the initiatory step in the Revolution, it was proper the anniversary of that great event should be fittingly honoured with a public demonstration. There was accordingly a grand ceremonial, called the 'National Confederation,' in the Champ de Mars on the 14th July. It was attended by the king, the members of the Assembly, federal deputations from various parts of France, and a large body of National Guards. The solemnities commenced by the celebration of mass at an altar raised conspicuously in the midst of the concourse, at which Talleyrand, bishop of Autun, officiated. The ceremony was concluded by all taking an oath 'to be faithful to the nation, the law, and the king;' and with salvoes of artillery the 'national federation' was completed.

This imposing display, with its ostentatious professions of loyalty, did not in the least prevent the breaking out of disorder. So many interests and feelings had been outraged by the recent sweeping changes, that various were the plots and plans to discredit the Revolution. Louis XVI., while anxious to keep well with the Assembly, did not fail to see that his position was becoming to the last degree perilous. Already he had had thoughts of quitting the country with his family, but had been restrained by the consideration that this would have furthered the design of the Duke of Orleans to be appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom. He also had the delusive hope that the other European sovereigns might in some way shield him from anything like personal violence. Day by day the state of affairs grew more gloomy. Notwithstanding the sales of church

property and the issue of assignats, the finances were in as desperate a condition as ever. Necker admonished the Assembly to avoid the discredit of national bankruptcy; and, to his consternation, a fresh issue of assignats was ordered, so far beyond all chance of redemption, that he resigned, 3d September 1790. Retiring to his native Switzerland, he had leisure to ponder on the failure of those dreams of human perfectibility which had led him to promote the Revolution. The other ministers at the same time retired, and men of inferior ability were put in their place.

The Gallican church had been stripped of its patrimony. It was doomed to suffer a yet greater indignity. The clergy of every degree were ordered to give obedience to an enactment which would take from them their spiritual dependence on the pope, and reduce them to the character of civil servants of the state. They were to swear an oath to this effect on the 4th January 1791, on pain of dismissal. Very few took the oath, and the great bulk of the clergy were pronounced contumacious. Henceforth, there was a nonjuring clergy, whom many looked upon as martyrs; and in adhering to their ministrations, which were deemed illegal, there occurred innumerable disorders in various parts of the country.

On the 18th March 1791, the Assembly abolished the right of primogeniture; and, in conformity to the levelling spirit of the times, established a compulsory rule of equal succession to property among children or nearest of kin. Of all the laws enacted by the Constituent Assembly, this one has wrought the most lasting mischief; for, through successive divisions and subdivisions of land, it has created a poor peasant proprietary, unfitted to take any intelligent part in public

business, and who are usually a facile herd in the hands of a central authority.

By the operation of the enactment against the clergy, the king was put to great straits—not being allowed to go to St Cloud, as he might there find a nonjuror for a confessor—and as his position otherwise was becoming almost unendurable, he resolved on flight with his family. To this design assistance was secretly lent by Mirabeau, for, demagogue as he was, he foresaw the end of monarchy, and the approach of a degree of anarchy which he had not at first contemplated. Much to the distress of the royal family, Mirabeau died, 2d April 1791, and the scheme was attempted to be carried out without him.

After adopting the greatest precautions, and using various disguises, the king and his family, with a few confidential servants, succeeded in departing from Paris on the night of the 20th June, towards the eastern frontiers; but being accidentally discovered at Varennes, they were brought back, and received with wild and threatening cries, and shouts for the abolition of the monarchy. The terror suffered by the queen had, in a single night, turned her hair gray. Lodged again in the Tuileries, the royal family were for some time strictly guarded, night and day, though, on discussing the subject of their flight, the Assembly could not discover that the king, by his excursion, had committed any illegal act. By the more thoughtful, the bringing back of Louis and his family was deemed a political blunder, and this has proved to be a correct opinion.

Robespierre, Marat, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, Fréron, and others, seized on the occurrence as favourable to promote their scheme of overthrowing royalty,

and setting up a republic. The mode of operation, as usual, was to rouse the mob to make a grand insurrectionary movement, which, under their leadership, should begin by a meeting in the Champ de Mars. The attempt was skilfully frustrated by Lafayette and the National Guard, who, by a well-directed fire, dispersed the concourse of anarchists. Had the Assembly at the same time ordered the forcible closing of the two most seditious of the clubs—the Jacobins and Cordeliers—the progress of the Revolution might have been staid. The leaders of the movement were allowed to go unpunished—a degree of lenity that only encouraged the enemies of peace and order.

In the lower region of the Rhone, there had recently been proceedings of a most outrageous kind in connection with Avignon and Venaissin—two counties, including the city of Avignon, which, since the middle ages, had been lawful possessions of the pope, who governed them by a legate. Affected by the revolutionary mania, the populace of Avignon chased away the legate from the palace, and declared that the city should henceforth belong to France; the municipality, at the same time, seized and sold the church bells and plate. Roused by this act of sacrilege, the rural population entered the city, murdered the town-clerk, and committed some other excesses. The anarchists took a terrible revenge on those within the town who were any way concerned in this outrage. Shutting the gates, to prevent escape, they fell upon and slaughtered nearly a hundred persons, of both sexes, with a degree of barbarity too shocking to be related. It is enough to say, that the hearts of the victims were torn out, and, with portions of the bodies, were cooked and eaten

in the midst of the carnage. Elated with these exploits, the revolutionary party petitioned the Assembly to annex the counties of Avignon and Venaissin to France. Without a shadow of right, the annexation was voted with thunders of applause, 14th September 1791.

The Constituent Assembly now drew its labours to a close. It had, as it thought, perfected the constitution, corrected all the more flagrant legal abuses, and placed the monarchy on a firm and popular basis. In a fit of disinterestedness, the members, as one of their last acts, passed a self-denying ordinance, by which they should not be eligible for election in next Assembly.

With not a little bitterness of feeling, Louis XVI. agreed to accept the constitution, by which he would relinquish the title of 'King of France and Navarre,' and be styled 'King of the French;' and as regards his sovereign power, except that he might appoint his own guards, and, if possible, exercise a right of veto, it was so considerably reduced as to be little better than nominal. There was, however, no choice. The ceremony of accepting the constitution publicly took place 14th September 1791. The Constituent Assembly closed its sittings on the 30th of the same month. During the two years and five months of its existence, it had enacted 1309 laws and decrees relative to the general administration. It is admitted that many of the changes effected were most salutary. The abolition of *lettres de cachet* and cruelty in punishments; the removal of the whole tribe of feudal burdens, corvées, and other forms of oppression; the extinction of the Parliament of Paris and the other parliaments; also the granting of religious toleration—all were particularly deserving of commendation. Those changes directed against

the structure of society were, on the contrary, of that evil tendency which history has since so signally demonstrated.

The Constituent Assembly committed an irretrievable blunder when it decreed that its members were not immediately eligible for re-election; for the Assembly contained a number of able men with moderate views, and strongly desirous of maintaining a hereditary monarchy, on however limited a footing. All these were now set aside by their own act, and an opening was made for a wholly new and inexperienced set of men, elected by constituencies professing the most extreme republican principles. Although such persons as Robespierre were excluded from the legislative body, they did equal if not greater mischief by their violent harangues in the clubs, which now more than ever exerted a domineering influence over the Assembly. No minister was allowed to sit in this new Assembly, and the monarch had no power to dissolve it. Compared with what succeeded it, the Constituent Assembly was a respectable body. The Legislative Assembly, as it was called, which met 1st October, was composed of individuals generally inferior in social status. Among the whole there were not fifty persons with means of livelihood above two pounds a week. Noisy, coarse in manners, and as presumptuous as they were ignorant, the members of this new Assembly were in most cases incompetent to deal with grave matters of legislation. As a beginning, they decreed that the title of Sire and Majesty should be disused in addressing the king; and, to shew his independence, one of the members kept on his hat in his presence.

Much of the business coming before the Assembly

was pre-arranged at the clubs. There, measures were adopted for carrying resolutions either by force of declamation, or by overawing the members by tumultuous shouts from the gallery. The most respectable members, in point of culture, were a class of politicians aiming at exalted republican virtue, called the Girondists, from the leaders of the party being sent as deputies from the department of the Gironde, in the south-west of France. The leaders of the Girondists were Vergniaud, Guadet, Gensonné, Isnard, Brissot, and Barbaroux. Clever, heroic, and eloquent, they were rash and inexperienced. They aimed at resembling the ancient Roman republicans, and were totally forgetful of the fact, that the bulk of the population of France were at this time unable to comprehend high political principle. Therein lay the great error of the party. Carried away by delusions, they actually joined the Jacobins in helping to dethrone the king, and bring on that state of anarchy in which, to their surprise and mortification, they were among the earliest victims.

Roland, one of the party of the Gironde, who had reached middle life, was a man of moderate abilities. When the king, early in 1792, chose a ministry from the moderate party, he was appointed minister of the interior. His house now became the resort of the Girondists, who were drawn to it by the literary and conversational powers of Madame Roland. This lady, one of the celebrities of the Revolution, possessed enthusiastic notions about liberty. In her youth, she is said to have wept that she had not been born a Spartan or Roman maiden; but now, elated with the political prospects of France, she declared that her country had at length nothing to envy in the republics of

antiquity. How grievously was she doomed to be disenchanted!

Everything tended to produce disorder. The emigrant noblesse in Germany excited indignation by their conspiracies to raise an army to invade France. Pressed by this danger, the Assembly issued decrees dooming to death and confiscation of estates all who did not return by the 1st January 1792. The next violent measure was that which ordained all nonjuring clergy to take the oath to the constitution on pain of being suspected of treason. Against this harsh measure the king made a decided stand, and his refusal to agree to it caused extraordinary perturbation. During the agitation on the subject, intelligence arrived of the insurrection of the slaves in San Domingo, and the murder of their owners. This disaster, which proved ultimately the loss of the colony, led to furious dissensions in the Assembly, and helped to stimulate the passions of the populace, already sufficiently roused by dearth, depreciated paper-money, and want of employment. Roland was dismissed; the Girondists resigned office; and a ministry of a very indifferent sort appointed.

As the king still declined to sanction the severe measures against the clergy, the municipality of Paris, under the leadership of Pétion, the mayor, roused the masses to present a petition to the Assembly, praying, among other things, for the annihilation of monarchy. On the 20th June, a vast crowd of men and women, carrying pikes and daggers, and shouting revolutionary songs, poured into the Assembly with the petition. The tumult, which lasted three hours, met with no check from the half-affrighted members. Headed by Santerre, a brewer, the crowd proceeded from the Assembly to

the palace, which having unceremoniously entered, a rush was made to the royal apartments. Here, the poor king received the multitude with a placid dignity, which somewhat discomposed them. Seated on a chair placed on a table within the embrasure of one of the windows, he put on a Cap of Liberty which a man in a state of drunkenness handed to him, in which guise he listened to the demand that he should assent to the proscription of the priests. Firmly refusing the request, he kept his composure, until the crowd dispersed, under the persuasions of several members of the Assembly. The queen, with her two children and the Princess Elizabeth, remained with the king during this horrid and trying scene.

From this time, the king and queen abandoned themselves to their fate; their only fear was for their children. On the 14th July, at the public ceremony commemorative of the taking of the Bastille, they saw by the looks of the multitude that they were the objects of merciless hostility. Their danger was increased by an injudicious proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick, that he was advancing from Coblentz at the head of a large army of Germans to give liberty to the king, and to maintain his authority. Infuriated by this manifesto, Danton, Robespierre, Marat, and other revolutionists, organised an attack on the Tuileries, for the purpose of making the royal family prisoners. In order not to depend solely on the depraved populace of Paris, ardent revolutionary mobs were invited from Marseilles and other parts of France—the Duke of Orleans aiding with funds to promote the utmost possible disorder.

The frightful excesses which from this time were committed, derived additional horror from the blending

of wild tumultuary cries, dances, and songs with scenes of bloodshed. The refrain of the song beginning '*Ça ira*' ('That will do') was the shout over the unhappy victims carried to execution. While indulging in the coarsest revelries, the mob danced the *Carmagnole*, which derived its name from Carmagnole in Piedmont—the dancing being accompanied with a song stimulative of acts of atrocity. The most stirring, however, of all the musical incitements was a warlike song composed by Rouget de Lisle, an officer of artillery at Strasburg, with a view to inspire a body of volunteers leaving that city in 1792. Caught up by levies of revolutionary troops in other quarters, it was adopted with fervour by the refuse of Marseilles, who were draughted to the capital previous to the grand attack on the Tuileries, and hence the song and tune have received the name of the *Marseillaise*.

Along with these follies, there arose a mania for introducing the dress and other usages of the ancient Greeks and Romans, under the notion that they were thus returning to the simplicity of republican manners. When a Roman slave received his liberty, his head was attired with a felt cap or cowl, called a *pileus*. The pileus, accordingly, became an emblem of freedom. The figure of Liberty on some of the coins of Antoninus holds such a cap in her right hand. From such an origin, the more ardent French republicans adopted the Cap of Liberty. The form of cap chosen was that known as the Phrygian bonnet, from its being represented on works of ancient art as worn by Phrygians and other Asiatics. It had a conical top bent forward and downward, like a nightcap; and being usually of a red colour, was called the *bonnet rouge*. Another freak

of the same kind was the planting of what they called Trees of Liberty in the public thoroughfares.

We would gladly, if we could, pass over the extraordinary instances of pure barbarism which characterised the revolutionary tumults. In their maniacal fury, the French did not confine themselves to mere killing, but took a wicked pleasure in perpetrating outrages on the bodies of the slain—even to the extent of cannibalism—which could scarcely have been expected from tribes of the lowest order of savages. A people priding themselves on their philosophy, their literature, and their refinement, sunk in social estimation below the Bosjesmen of Southern Africa or the natives of Tierra del Fuego. The excesses were, of course, the work of the most despicable of the population; but in every instance, politicians of high standing, men renowned in science and art, fomented and extenuated atrocities which remain an indelible stain on the national character. The outrage on the Tuileries, now to come under notice, exemplifies this in a marked degree. It took place on the 10th August 1792, which was the last day of freedom of the unfortunate Louis XVI.

With reinforcements of troops from Marseilles, the leaders of the insurrection had an army of thirty thousand men to carry out their savage design. As their approach was expected, the palace was put in a state of defence, but beyond this the king would take no steps to rely on military force. During the night, he and the queen could take no rest, but sat up in a condition of calm despair. The attack commenced at six in the morning. As massacre was inevitable, the attendants persuaded the royal family to seek refuge in the Assembly, and it was with much difficulty they reached the hall in safety.

Meanwhile, the Swiss guards in the palace were attacked and overpowered. Some tried to escape by the gardens behind the palace, but there they were pursued and killed amidst the trees and statues. A remnant of the Swiss and other guards who had defended the Tuileries was ruthlessly massacred. A few servants were saved by throwing themselves from the windows; others, less fortunate, were put to death. The palace was ransacked, bureaus forced open and plundered, the furniture destroyed, and the most horrible orgies took place. Streams of blood flowed everywhere from the roof to the cellars, and it was scarcely possible to set foot on a single spot without treading on a dead body. Bands of ferocious women killed the wounded Swiss who had been made prisoners, tore out their entrails, cut off portions of their bodies, which they roasted and ate, and committed other barbarities too horrible to bear description. Upwards of five thousand persons were slaughtered on this dreadful 10th August.

For fifteen hours, the king, the queen, the dauphin, the princess royal, and the Princess Elizabeth—a miserable group—were constrained to sit on a confined seat in the Assembly, hearing the wildest harangues, that were partially drowned in the uproarious cries of the mob outside. In a stupor, they were, at one o'clock in the morning of the 11th, conducted to a place of detention in the building of the Feuillants. The French monarchy was practically at an end. For several days, there was a general obliteration of memorials of royalty. The statue of Louis XIV. in the centre of the Place Vendôme, of Henry IV. on the Pont-Neuf, with other statues, were destroyed, and various churches and private dwellings devastated. Any one resisting, was either instantly

killed, or dragged into the street, and hanged with the cords from which depended the public lamps. The cry of *à la lanterne* was equivalent to a sentence of death.

On the 13th, the royal family were transferred to the Temple, a gloomy prison in the eastern part of Paris; and here they were waited on by a few personal attendants who had escaped the massacre of the 10th, and were desirous to serve them in their dire extremity. On the 19th, the Revolutionary Tribunal was instituted for the trial of alleged rebels to the new order of affairs, and on the 21st the first victim was sent to the guillotine.

Searching visits to private houses having filled the prisons with suspected aristocrats, it was resolved to massacre them *en masse*. The municipality taking in hand this atrocity, hired a band of three hundred assassins, who began the work of destruction on the 2d September. The unhappy victims, driven from their cells, were stabbed, cut down, and murdered as they issued into the street. With savage yells, each prison was attacked in turn. To afford amusement to the spectators, seats were arranged for men and women at the doorways of the prisons, and at night lamps were lit, so that nothing of the murderous spectacle might be lost. Upwards of two hundred clergy perished in the massacre. The female prisoners suffered great barbarities. Among the whole, none was so grossly maltreated as the Princess de Lamballe. This lady, of uncommon beauty, an attached friend of the queen, was dragged from the prison of La Force, and cruelly slain by cuts of a sabre. Her body, after being brutally mangled, was stripped of its clothing, and treated with brutal indecency. It was then divided into fragments,

which were borne through Paris on the points of pikes. The massacre lasted from the 2d to the 6th, and about eight thousand persons perished. Their bodies, thrown into trenches, were afterwards lifted, and the skulls and other bones conveyed to the extensive catacombs which are excavated under a part of Paris. The wage of the assassins was twenty-four francs, nearly a pound, a day, which was paid by the magistrates. No attempt was made by the Assembly to stay the massacre, and the citizens looked on with indifference while this infamous scene was enacted by not more than three hundred of the refuse of mankind. At Rheims and other places, there were similar atrocities.

The massacres had been skilfully organised by the Jacobins for an electioneering purpose. The days of the Legislative Assembly were about to expire; a new election was at hand, and it was important to secure members of the most ardently republican type. The scheme was successful. Robespierre, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, Tallien, Anacharsis Clootz, Collot d'Herbois, Billaud Varennes, David, an eminent artist, and the Duke of Orleans, who now called himself Philippe Egalité, were among the deputies from Paris. The Girondists were strong in numbers, but, being elected by provincial constituencies, they had no support from the Parisian populace, who now more than ever upheld the power of the Jacobins.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE REPUBLIC.—SEPTEMBER 1792 TO OCTOBER 1795.

THE new Assembly, styled the National Convention, met on the 21st September. In its sittings, parties were distinctly marked. There were the *côté droit*, or right side of the president; the *côté gauche*, or left side; and the *plaine*, or part in the centre. Those on the right, reputed as friends of the constitution, were known as the Feuillants, from their belonging to a club which met in the monastery of that name. The extreme party, connected mostly with the Jacobin Club, sat on the high benches on the left, from which circumstance they were familiarly designated the Mountain. The first act of the Convention was the abolition of monarchy, and proclamation of a republic. Fresh issues of assignats to an enormous amount were also decreed. In proportion as new issues of this paper-money were put in circulation, their value fell in the market. It being dangerous to refuse them in payment, many tradesmen began to give up selling; but as the assignats were a legal tender, persons did not scruple to impose them on creditors in discharge of their debts. Both through the profuse issue of assignats, and the passing of a law which prescribed that not above a certain maximum price should be charged for articles

of daily consumption, immense losses were suffered. We may have some idea of the vigorous way in which the system of assignats was worked, in the fact, that the annual expenditure rose to as much as £130,000,000 sterling.

Embarked in the enterprise of regenerating the world, and defying all the enemies of France, the revolutionists acted with an energy and daring which have no parallel in modern history. The profuse issue of a comparatively worthless paper-money, compulsory loans, excessive taxation, and terror of the guillotine, were the agencies on which they relied. There was above all a fervid enthusiasm in favour of republican notions of liberty, along with a deadly hatred of 'aristocrats,' which carried the country on in spite of the general disorder of affairs. So aided and animated, the French forces, organised by the genius of Carnot, and commanded by Dumourier, drove all before them in their campaign in the north of France and the Netherlands. On the 28th September 1792, they gained a victory over the Prussians at Valmy; and on the 6th November following, they were equally victorious over the Austrians at the battle of Jemappes. In the Netherlands, the French commanders, acting under orders, opened the navigation of the Scheldt, contrary to a treaty with Holland, to which England was a party.

In October, Savoy was overrun by missionaries of Jacobinism, 'armed with the torch of reason and liberty,' who succeeded in stirring up the natives to revolution. Deputations of Savoyards appeared before the Convention, praying that their country might be incorporated with France—a request which was at once agreed to, and the new district was incorporated as the department

of Mont Blanc. Nice and the principality of Monaco were soon after seized, and incorporated as the department of the Alpes Maritimes (November 1792). Inflamed by these and other successes, the Convention trampled down all international treaties and obligations, proclaimed the 'rights of man;' 'war to the palace, and peace to the cottage;' decreed the suppression of all constituted authorities; and charged their generals to yield assistance to all peoples struggling to obtain 'liberty, equality, and fraternity,' December 15, 1792 —all which was nothing short of a proclamation of universal hostility.

Step by step the revolutionists had abandoned everything like moderation; having deposed the king, their proposal was now to bring him to trial and condemn him. This extreme measure, after being faintly opposed by the Girondists, was at length resolved on. It would be difficult to say of what the unfortunate Louis was guilty, except that he had been much too gentle and confiding. The Jacobins had little difficulty in hatching accusations against the fallen monarch. He was charged with writing a letter, on the 16th April 1791, to the bishop of Clermont, in which he said, 'that if he recovered his power, he would restore the clergy and the constitution to their former state.' The absurd charge was also made that he had conspired to massacre the whole members of the Convention. After a discussion on the subject, a resolution was carried by Robespierre, 'to summon Louis Capet to the bar to answer for his crimes.'

The royal family had been about four months in close confinement in the Temple. They had two or three small apartments allotted to them, and there

they spent their time, partly in reading such books as were allowed them, or in a routine of humble duties befitting their altered condition. The king read much; he also spent some hours daily in instructing the dauphin. The queen paid similar attentions to the princess royal. From their lofty prison windows, they could hear the ferocious multitude shouting revolutionary songs and menaces. It was only by means of Clery, a faithful valet, that they gained any intelligence of public events. Latterly, to the grief of the little party, the king and the dauphin were separated from the others, and confined in a different tower of the prison, but were allowed the solace of dining together.

On the 11th December, the king was conveyed to the Convention; where, having heard the accusations against him, and suffered an examination, he was conducted back to the Temple to prepare for his trial. Next day he was informed that he might employ counsel, which he did. Malesherbes volunteered his services, and they were gratefully accepted. On the 26th December, the unfortunate monarch was carried to his trial. M. Desèze, an eloquent pleader who was engaged to make a speech in defence, acquitted himself admirably, but elicited no sympathetic response from the auditory. Louis spoke briefly: 'The particulars of my defence are before you. I shall not repeat them. In speaking to you, perhaps for the last time, I declare that my conscience reproaches me with nothing, and that my advocates have only stated what is true. I was never afraid of having my conduct publicly examined; but my heart is torn with anguish to find myself accused, in the act of impeachment, of having sought to shed the blood of the people; and, above all, that the calamitous events

of the 10th of August are attributed to me. I had hoped that the whole tenor of my life would have preserved me from such an imputation.' The dignity and sensibility with which he pronounced these words made a deep impression; and, fearful of an outburst in his favour, the president directed him to withdraw. Louis saw that his case had been prejudged. Before leaving the hall, he addressed some kind words to his counsel, remarking, with looks of despondency: 'Was it for this that I made so many concessions—that I so constantly strove for the happiness of France?'

Transferred once more to the Temple, the king made some preparations for the concluding tragedy. He wrote his testament, which embraced a vindication of his conduct to posterity, with a forgiveness of his misguided subjects. He perused attentively Hume's account of Charles I. in his last moments. Meanwhile, days were consumed by the Convention in coming to a decision. On the part of the Jacobins, there were ebullitions of violent passions. Some members suggested acquittal, others spoke of punishing by imprisonment or exile. Egalité, the infamous Orleans, incurred ignominy and contempt by adjudging his kinsman to death. After much debate, the members unanimously pronounced that 'Louis Capet' was guilty. The Girondists imagined that, although voting that the king was guilty, they might save his life by moving that there should be an appeal to the people. This weak device was rejected by a large majority. The only question now regarded the nature of the punishment. From the cries with which the clubs and the streets resounded, no one could doubt

what that would be. In 721 votes, there was a majority of 45 for the punishment of death.

The matter was not yet ended. The votes had to be verified, and the day of execution fixed. The protracted proceedings did not terminate until the 20th January, when it was decided that the execution should take place next day. A deputation from the Convention, accompanied by the ferocious Santerre, as commissioner from the municipality, attended at the Temple, and officially announced the sentence of death, which was to be executed next morning. The king asked for a respite of three days to prepare for the scaffold. It was refused. A request to be allowed an interview with his family, and that he might receive the visits of a confessor, was granted, after communicating with the Convention. The sad interview of the king with his family, which took place at eight in the evening, was of the most affecting nature. At the end of two hours, the family, with sighs and tears, parted, never more to meet on earth. Early next morning, the king received the consolations of religion from the Abbé Edgeworth. At nine o'clock, Santerre came to convey him to execution. Environed by an immense military force, to keep back the crowd, the king was driven in a carriage, during a tedious procession, to the Place Louis XV., the name of which had been changed to that of Place de la Révolution. In the centre of this open space, the scaffold was erected. Before submitting himself to the executioners, the king attempted to address the assembled multitude; but an officer ordered the drums to beat, and he stopped. Receiving the final benediction of the venerable abbé, who accompanied him: 'Son of St Louis, ascend to heaven,' in a few

moments Louis XVI. perished by the axe of the guillotine, 21st January 1793.

Thus died Louis XVI. on a public scaffold in the thirty-ninth year of his age, the victim of a revolution which his virtues and easy disposition unfitted him to control, and against which he had been left to struggle unaided. No sooner was the execution effected, than the ferocious rabble rushed forward and dipped their pikes and handkerchiefs in the blood, and one actually tasted it. Portions of the hair and clothes were sold by the executioners, and carried off with shouts of *Ça ira!* and *Vive la République!* The remains of the king were immediately interred in the ancient cemetery of the Madeleine, where now stands the elegant modern church of that name.

When the intelligence of the execution of Louis XVI. spread abroad, the whole of Europe was moved with horror and astonishment. Shortly before the outbreak of the Revolution, a numerous and respectable party in England, including Burke and Pitt, had begun to conceive plans of parliamentary reform. The disorganisation in France at once turned the current of opinion. Alarmed by the spread of republican doctrines, by the audacious proclamations of the Convention, also by the encroachment on the treaty with Holland, the British government prepared for extremities. The execution of Louis XVI. left no room, as it was thought, for hesitation. The French ambassador received orders to quit London, February 1, 1793. The Convention responded by declaring war against England and Holland. Thus the French war was begun that, with a short intermission, lasted for the space of twenty years.

In entering upon this tremendous contest, the British

government is now generally believed to have been too precipitate. No doubt, the proclamations of the Convention were irritating; they had already stirred up a widespread sedition, which threatened danger to the state. On the other hand, England had acted indiscreetly in entering into a treaty with Holland to shut the navigation of the Scheldt, thereby as effectually ruining Antwerp as London would be if deprived of the Thames. As regards the execution of Louis XVI., however much the perpetrators of that barbarity were to be execrated, the event, including the change from monarchy to a republic, would not now be deemed a valid reason for going to war. It may perhaps be admitted that Mr Pitt acted for the best in the exceedingly critical state of affairs. But the government over which he presided were evidently not at all aware of the power of their opponents, or the length to which the struggle would be carried.

The French armies were no longer a soldiery led by titled commanders with old-fashioned notions of strategy. They were forces animated with a species of demoniac frenzy, conducted from victory to victory by generals of uncommon ability. An entirely new order of men had arisen in France. Society was in a sense turned upside down. Daring spirits, who would otherwise have drawn out life obscurely in country towns, were now at the head of affairs in the capital; and with a strange mixture of patriotism, savagery, and delusion, were wholly regardless of consequences. In entering on the war, England soon felt that, with such antagonists, it had involved itself in a struggle for existence.

The most remarkable of these revolutionists was Robespierre. He was born at Arras in 1758, and with

a fair education was bred a country attorney. Elected to the States-general, he began his political career. He was small in person, with a sharp countenance marked by small-pox; his forehead receded considerably; and while engaged in debate, his lips quivered with the eagerness of his feelings. Vanity was one of his ruling passions. He dressed tastefully, wore hair-powder, and in his apartment were numerous mirrors, in which he could see himself whichever way he turned. Some of his tastes indicated gentleness and kindliness. He was fond of flowers, and usually had one stuck in his button-hole. He was attached to animals, and walked out in a spirit of kindness with a favourite dog. In his habits, he was frugal; did not get into debt; and was known to help his poorer neighbours. He had the reputation of being incorruptible. Neither bribe nor personal intercession could influence him. With these good qualities, Robespierre was nevertheless a monster. His speeches counselled measures the most violent and unjust. Relying for popularity on the mob, the burden of his harangues was, that the humbler classes were oppressed by tyrants, while in reality no one was a greater tyrant than himself. Society could only be purified by sweeping to destruction all who partook of the quality of aristocrats. What he wanted was three hundred thousand heads. He had a brother in the Convention, ordinarily known as Robespierre the younger, who supported him in his savage projects.

Danton, the next great leader of the anarchists, was unlike Robespierre, for he was devoid of honest principle. With a herculean frame, and a voice like the roar of a bull, he was bold, ambitious, and went beyond all others in audacity. He was the author of the

memorable saying, as applied to revolutions: '*De l'audace, encore de l'audace, toujours de l'audace!*' With audacity, everything could be accomplished. Having been bred a barrister, he had an advantage in public speaking, and the circumstance of his being president of the Cordeliers gave him an influence in the Convention.

Marat was a blood-thirsty ruffian, without a single good quality. He had been bred to medicine, which he studied at Edinburgh about the year 1774; and while in that city he wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled *The Chains of Slavery*. Until the Revolution broke out, he was not noted for extreme opinion. Catching the general frenzy, his malignant passions were roused, and he exceeded all bounds in his cry for vengeance. He lived by editing a journal, *L'Ami du Peuple* (The Friend of the People), in which he advocated the commission of every species of atrocity. Like Robespierre, he had made up his mind to the fall of a certain number of heads: two hundred and eighty thousand was his calculation, which was moderate in comparison to what were the actual sacrifices. This Friend of the People was of the most ungainly aspect. He is described as filthy in his garb, with greasy hair, long nails at the ends of his dirty skinny fingers, and a hideous countenance; all which peculiarities are said to have gone far to establish his popularity.

St Just rivalled Marat in ferocity. He affected no sentimental esteem for the people. He was a sanguinary despot, who aimed at destroying all of superior rank, and lodging the supreme power in a republican oligarchy. Knowing how easily the French are imposed on by delusive falsehoods, he inflamed them by the fabrication of lies of the wildest and most improbable

kind; such as, that the king had caused many thousands of innocent citizens to be strangled and thrown into the Seine, and that 15,000 smugglers had been hanged by his orders. Whenever Robespierre, Danton, and the others wanted the concoction of a stirring falsehood, St Just was ready with his inventions. No one, on looking at him, could have imagined him to be so heartless and unprincipled. He had an elegant, gentlemanly air, with a countenance betokening a kind of melancholy benevolence. Yet, no more cruel tyrant ever domineered over a credulous and misguided people.

If St Just might be termed the villain of the revolutionary drama, Anacharsis Clootz was the buffoon. By birth a Prussian, Clootz dissipated much of his fortune, came to Paris, and threw himself so deeply into the revolutionary mania as to act like a madman. He attracted attention by appearing at the bar of the Assembly in 1790, followed by a band of Parisian porters, dressed in the costumes of different nations, and which he described as an 'Embassy from the Human Race.' On all occasions of public ceremonial, he appeared as the 'Orator of the Human Race,' which he preferred as his proper title. He constantly declaimed against Christianity, and declared that 'his heart was French, and his soul sans-culottes.'

Condorcet, an eminent French author and mathematician, plunged into the popular frenzy, and, lending his power of reasoning to the Jacobins, was one of those members of the Convention who urged that Louis XVI. should be put on his trial, and condemned to a life of imprisonment in chains. Fabre d'Eglantine, also a writer of some repute, equally distinguished himself by his extreme political views. Collot d'Herbois,

Couthon, and Carrier figure among the more rabid of the band of destructives. Hébert, who had been a check-taker at a theatre, and dismissed for dishonesty, was an eloquent preacher of insurrection. He edited a journal, the *Père Duchesne*, which, abounding in the grossest ribaldry, was an immense favourite with the multitude.

Of the Girondists and Moderates, little more need be said than that they incurred the reproach of having aided the Jacobins to rise to that degree of power which enabled the anarchical faction to do without them. To the Moderates belonged Bailly, Lafayette, and Dumourier. Shocked at the excesses which brought the king to the scaffold, Lafayette relinquished his military command, and left Paris for Flanders, but was taken prisoner by the Austrians, and conveyed to Olmütz, where he remained for about five years. Dumourier, also an adherent of constitutional monarchy, became disgusted with the proceedings of the Convention. Accused of being a traitor while commanding in the north, he was ordered to come to Paris. This request he prudently declined, and, accompanied by the Duke de Chartres, son of Egalité, took refuge in the ranks of the Austrians, March 1793.

Greatly enraged by the defection of Dumourier, the Jacobins, finding that the ordinary modes of trial were too formal and slow in their operations, instituted an extraordinary tribunal which should promptly exterminate the enemies of the republic. The Girondists, now seriously alarmed for their personal safety, tried unsuccessfully to prevent the establishment of so despotic a power. This terrible court of justice—or, more properly, injustice—which came to be known as the Revolutionary

Tribunal, was decreed March 10, 1793, and to it was appointed Fouquier-Tinville as public accuser, a man who had only one pleasure in existence—that of recording a sentence of death. On the 21st of the same month, the Convention decreed, that in each of the 48,000 communes in France, the inhabitants should elect a committee of twelve persons, to search, by domiciliary visits, for enemies to the republic, and to take them before provincial revolutionary tribunals, which were invested with the power of carrying out sentences of death. On the 24th, a General Committee of Public Safety was decreed for the whole of France. These, and some other measures placed the lives of the whole people at the mercy of the Jacobins, and those who subserviently courted their favour. According to Marat, it was thus necessary 'to organise the despotism of liberty to overthrow the despotism of kings.'

If there were any despots left in France, they did not belong to royalty. Louis XVI. was in his grave; his unhappy family were strictly imprisoned in the Temple; the Bourbons who had fled were banished by decree; any one who should attempt a restoration of monarchy was to suffer the penalty of death; Philippe Egalité, though continuing to sit in the Convention, was under surveillance. The French, however, must always have some one to bear the blame of their misfortunes. Marat, the tribune of the people, discovered that the dearth of food was caused by monopolisers and shopkeepers. In his journal of 25th March, he recommended sharp measures with these daring criminals, as he called them. 'In every country,' he said, 'where the rights of man are not empty titles, ostentatiously recorded in a mere declaration, the plunder of a few shops, and the hanging of the forestallers

at their doors, would soon put a stop to those malversations which are driving five millions of men to despair, and causing thousands to perish for want.' The mob readily took the hint. They began by insisting that all prices should be reduced one-half, and purchases were forcibly made at that rate. The next step was to take articles without payment, and, March 26, there was a general plunder of the grocers' shops, until the riot was quelled by a military force. Violent disputes as to the cause of the disturbance took place in the Convention. Marat was accused of inciting the rabble, and sent for trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal, where, being acquitted, he was carried in triumph, shoulder-high, to the hall of the Convention, April 13.

At this period, France was surrounded on all sides by foreign enemies. On the 9th March, a coalition was formed against it by England, Austria, Prussia, Holland, Spain, Portugal, the Two Sicilies, the Roman States, Sardinia, and Piedmont. To meet so formidable a confederacy by forces at sea and land, a rigorous system of conscription was instituted, which proved distasteful in various places, particularly in La Vendée, a district in the south-west of France, bounded on one side by the Atlantic, and partly embraced in the valley of the Loire. In this quarter, the Revolution had never been popular. The inhabitants consisted chiefly of small farmers, a prosperous and contented race, living under a body of kind landlords, who, unlike the absentee seigneurs in other provinces, lived habitually on their estates, and maintained an agreeable intercourse with their tenants. Attached to their landlords, their religion, and the old monarchical government, the people shrunk from taking any part in the

revolutionary movement. They remained tranquil until 1791, when the Constituent Assembly declared that the clergy should take the civic oath. The carrying out of this decree produced violent ebullition; but there was nothing like actual rebellion until the Convention enacted new and stringent measures for raising men for the republican army. On the 10th March 1793, the day allotted for drawing the conscripts, an outbreak took place. Such was the beginning of that remarkable civil war in La Vendée, memorable for the heroic exploits of Cathelineau, Charette, and Henri Larochejaquelein, which did not close until 1795. The resistance offered by the brave Vendéans invites the mournful consideration, that, had Louis XVI. put himself at the head of this army of provincials, and the royalists everywhere rallied to his standard, his fate, as well as the fate of France, might have been very different.

Attacks by foreign enemies, the civil war in La Vendée, the defection of Dumourier, accounts of fresh disasters in San Domingo, and the troubled state of Paris, might well give concern. Threatened on every hand, the Jacobins were a match for it all. Committees of Public Safety, revolutionary tribunals, and guillotines were at work throughout the country. To attain an unchallenged predominance, the Jacobins now resorted to the plan of getting rid of the Girondists. In this they were helped by an accident. The misrule of the commune of Paris induced the Convention, on the 15th May 1793, to appoint a commission of twelve to inquire into the source of the disorders. Ascertaining that Hébert was deeply concerned in the insurrectionary movements, he was arrested, and put in prison.

Forthwith ensued an extraordinary commotion, in which was heard the cry of 'Down with the Girondists.' Under the intimidation of an armed mob, 31st May, a majority of the Convention decreed the arrest of thirty Girondists, and several other orders for arrest followed. Some of the party escaped before they could be conducted to prison, but they were caught after wandering about and undergoing much suffering.

The end of May was also signalised by an insurrection in Corsica, and an insurrection at Lyons against the Jacobins. The Reign of Terror had commenced. Marat was daily pouring forth his incitements to renewed horrors, when he himself was cut off. Charlotte Corday, a young woman of prepossessing appearance and good reputation, was living in Caen, when a party of the proscribed Girondists passed in their flight through Normandy. Her hatred of the monstrosities of the Jacobins was intensified by conversing with the unfortunate fugitives, and she conceived the idea of travelling to Paris, and slaying either Robespierre or Marat. Her selection of Marat was determined by the fact of his having announced a demand for a hundred or two hundred thousand more victims for the guillotine. Arrived in Paris, and provided with a dagger, she twice sought admission to Marat unsuccessfully; but on the third occasion, 13th July 1793, was admitted on the plea that she had important news from Caen to communicate. She found Marat in his bath, who, to some statements she made, declared that the Girondists who had fled to Normandy, some of whom were her own friends, would be guillotined in a few days. She no longer hesitated, but plunged her dagger into the monster's heart, and he died without a groan. Making no attempt

to escape, she was at once arrested, and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, where she boldly avowed and justified her act. She was of course condemned to the guillotine, and the sentence was carried into effect 17th July 1793. The 'great patriot,' as Robespierre called Marat, was honoured with a public funeral.

The proscription of the Girondists roused a spirit of resistance in various parts of the south of France, where they were held in esteem, and a jealousy entertained of the Jacobin extravagances. Lyons, which has latterly been remarkable for its extreme democratic tendencies, in the autumn of 1793, attempted to hold out against the decrees of the Convention; but was captured after a long resistance, 10th October, and subjected to innumerable horrors, inflicted by a body of commissioners, headed by Couthon, Fouché, and Collot d'Herbois. This last-mentioned was an actor, and had a deep grudge against the city, in consequence of having, ten years previously, been hissed off the stage. Now was the time for his revenge. Aided by an armed force, and by the most worthless of the population, the commissioners resolved to destroy the town, and exterminate all above the humblest position. Couthon was the captain of the band. Like a destroying angel he traversed the streets, carrying in his hand a silver hammer, with which he struck the door of each house that was to be levelled with the ground; immediately, a mark with chalk was made, and the building demolished. Thus were all the finer mansions and palaces of Lyons capriciously destroyed, their value, as is estimated, having been at least £700,000. By Fouché and Collot d'Herbois, scenes of dramatic horror were enacted. The churches were desecrated by offensive orgies, the crucifixes and copies of the

gospel were burned on the altars, the consecrated bread trampled under foot, and an ass with the sacred vessels hung round its neck was driven derisively through the town. We have not space to describe the destruction of human life. The guillotine being not sufficiently rapid in its evolutions, whole crowds were destroyed by the fire of artillery. Upwards of six thousand persons were killed, and far larger numbers were ruined.

At Nantes, which had provoked republican vengeance by its connection with the successes of the Vendéans, there were about the same time even worse atrocities committed by Carrier, a man of infamous character. By his orders, there was an almost indiscriminate guillotining of men, women, and children. To vary the cruelty, this inhuman wretch caused men and women to be stripped naked, bound together, and drowned, which he called 'republican marriages.' Another species of drowning was his *noyades*, or 'republican baptisms,' which consisted in putting some hundreds of children, along with men and women, into the hold of a vessel, and then sinking it in a deep part of the Loire, where the whole were drowned. In one month, fifteen thousand persons perished; and the total number killed in and about Nantes, during the Reign of Terror, was upwards of thirty thousand. So many mutilated bodies were thrown into the Loire, that the river was red with blood, and this horrid discoloration extended several miles into the sea, while the thousands of floating carcases were the prey of sharks, and of flights of vultures which hovered over the waves.

The fate of the surviving members of the royal family now calls for notice. On the execution of Louis XVI., the dauphin was acknowledged to be king in all the

courts of Europe; and by the armies fighting against the Republic he was proclaimed by the title of Louis XVII. At the same time, his uncle, Monsieur, the Count de Provence (he who afterwards became Louis XVIII.), assumed the position of Regent. All these titular dignities were of no avail in mitigating the sufferings of the poor boy and the other royal captives in the Temple. The whole were under the charge of the commune, or municipality, which, by various mean agents, subjected them to the most cruel privations. At the death of the king, they were allowed to put on mourning, which was the only indulgence granted. It was a consolation that they were permitted to remain together; but even this was at length denied them. At ten o'clock at night on the 3d July 1793, six commissaries entered their apartments with an order to separate 'the son of Capet' from his mother, and consign him to the guardianship of a person named Simon. The child was ill and asleep in bed; over the posts the queen had hung a shawl, to guard his eyes from the light, by which she and the Princess Elizabeth were mending their clothes. The noise made by the commissaries awakened the child, who clung to his mother for protection. Entreaties to leave him till next day were harshly disregarded. Only a few minutes were allowed to put on his dress. When about to relinquish him into the hands of the men, who were coarsely expressing their impatience, the queen addressed him in a few solemn words: 'My child, we are about to part. Bear in mind all I have said to you of your duties when I shall be no longer near you to repeat it. Never forget God, who thus tries you; nor your mother, who loves you. Be good, patient, kind, and your father

will look down from heaven and bless you.' So saying, she kissed him, and parted from him for ever.

Leaving for the present the young fair-haired dauphin, we turn to the fate of the captive queen, whose unjustifiable maltreatment had everywhere, except in France, excited deep emotions of compassion. In England, all persons of sensibility were profoundly affected, none more so than Edmund Burke, whose striking picture of the reverses of this unfortunate princess will ever be held in remembrance. 'It is now,' said he, 'sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, so fair a vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she had just begun to move in; glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendour, and joy. Oh, what a revolution! and what a heart must I have to contemplate, without emotion, that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream, when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic distant love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her, in a nation of gallant men—in a nation of honour and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look which threatened her with insult. But the age of chivalry is gone; that of sophists, economists, and calculators has succeeded, and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex—that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even

in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment is gone. It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound; which inspired courage, while it mitigated ferocity; which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness.'

On the 2d August, the queen experienced a fresh grief; she was parted from her daughter, the Princess Royal, and her sister-in-law, the Princess Elizabeth, and removed to the Conciergerie, preparatory to her trial. A narrow damp cell was now the residence of Marie Antoinette. Here she was detained until the 14th October, on which day she was brought before her judges in the Revolutionary Tribunal. The accusations against her chiefly were, that she had interfered in state affairs and influenced her husband. No precise fact could be brought against her. The efforts made by Chaveau Lagarde, her advocate, were unavailing. She was condemned to death. Conducted back to prison, a brief period separated her from eternity. On the morning of the 16th October, she was taken from her wretched cell for execution. Though she had cut off her hair, and her features were pale and emaciated, she, still in her dignity and composure, was worthy of admiration. Dressed in white, she was placed in a cart with her hands tied behind her, and conducted by a circuitous route to the Place de la Révolution. Crowds thronging the thoroughfare to see her pass, yelled with exultation when she made her appearance; but no cries disturbed her in this her transit from life to death. At the spot where her husband had perished she ascended

the scaffold, giving only a look for a moment towards the Tuileries. With courage she submitted to the executioners; one of whom, with heartless barbarity, exhibited her head to the people.

It was the Girondists' turn next. Secured in various ways, they were, by a decree of the Convention, tried before the Revolutionary Tribunal at Paris. The trial, beginning on the 19th October, lasted nine days. But for the look of the thing, they might as well not have been tried at all. The whole, as a matter of course, were condemned. Valazé stabbed himself when sentence was pronounced, but his body was ordered to be guillotined with the others. The trial and sentence of the leading members of this renowned party caused more excitement than had been previously witnessed.

Their last night spent together in prison is said by a French historian (M. Thiers), to have been 'sublime.' It seems, on the contrary, to have been unbecoming rational beings placed in their situation. They sang hymns to France and liberty, and there is no evidence that any of them repented of having voted for the death of the king, or for aiding to bring about that convulsion which was laying the country waste. Clinging to their Utopian ideas to the last, they affected a Roman resolution, and, as they marched in a body to execution, they sang a parody on the *Marseillaise*, derisive of the Jacobins; and died with a shout of *Vive la République!* on their lips. The whole were executed in thirty-one minutes.

There might be some pity for the generous and infatuated Girondists, but none for the next victim of the guillotine, Philippe Egalité. Giving way to an intrinsic wickedness of character, he voted for all the violent

measures of the Jacobins, and helped them to foment disorders everywhere. Having served their purpose, they found it desirable to send him to the guillotine. Billaud Varennes denounced him in the Convention as having aided the defenders of Lyons and the insurrectionists in La Vendée, and craved that Egalité might be handed to the Revolutionary Tribunal for trial. The proposal was unanimously supported. Egalité was tried, condemned, and executed, November 6, 1793—meeting his fate with stoical fortitude, and leaving none in France to mourn his loss.

About this time, there was a vigilant proscription of celebrities. Among these was Condorcet, who, knowing what would be his fate, concealed himself in the house of a friend in Paris; but feeling that his generous protector was incurring an extreme risk in his behalf, he set out, was arrested, and, to save himself from the guillotine, took poison, which he carried about his person, and died in prison. Madame Roland, who had for some time been imprisoned, was condemned, and conducted to the guillotine, November 9. When about to ascend the scaffold, she apostrophised a gigantic statue of Liberty: 'O Liberty! how many crimes are committed in thy name!' M. Roland, her husband, who had been minister under Louis XVI., and also under the Republic in the early part of 1793, did not long survive her. Wandering about in the neighbourhood of Rouen, he sat down by the side of a tree, where he was found dead, having, in his despair, stabbed himself to the heart. Bailly, a venerable magistrate, who had been president of the States-general, and ever upheld the law, was condemned; neither his philanthropy nor services to science being of avail to save him. His death was

accompanied by harrowing circumstances. When led to the scaffold in the Place de la Révolution, the mob insisted that he should be beheaded in the Champ de Mars. The scaffold was accordingly taken down and removed, the poor victim walking behind it in a bitter storm, and often falling from cold and fatigue. After a journey of two hours, amidst a drenching fall of snow and sleet, Bailly was released from all his earthly troubles by the guillotine.

In the midst of the work of carnage, the Convention had sufficient composure to institute a new era, that of the French Republic. A decree to this effect was passed on the 5th October, but the new reckoning did not come into operation until 6th November. The Christian era, with the ordinary arrangement of months and weeks, was wholly laid aside. The weekly Sabbath, the oldest institution on earth, was abolished, and to be no more heard of. It was ordained that the new era should date from the 22d September 1792, which was to be the first day of the year I.—the epoch of the foundation of the republic. The year was to consist of twelve months of thirty days each, with five complementary days to complete an ordinary year, and a sixth complementary day in leap-years. To the months were given names significant of the weather or the seasons. Beginning with the autumn, September 22d, they were as follows: Vendémiaire, vintage month; Brumaire, fog month; Frimaire, sleet month; Nivose, snow month; Pluviose, rain month; Ventose, wind month; Germinal, blossom month; Floréal, flower month; Prairial, meadow month; Messidor, harvest month; Thermidor, hot month; Fructidor, fruit month. Each month was divided into three parts, called decades.

The first day of a decade was called Primidi; the second, Duodi; and so on. The last day, called Decadi, was to be a holiday. The complementary days at the end of the year were to be festivals in honour of labour, genius, and other matters in popular estimation.

Already, according to the practice of the French in their revolutions, there had been an alteration in the names of streets and places of public resort, and emblems of the fallen dynasty had been removed. By a decree, the Convention went a step farther. It ordered the destruction of the tombs of the kings at St Denis; and this act of barbarism was carried out by the commune, aided by the mob and a military force. Tombs of the kings of France from the earliest ages of the monarchy —also those of the most distinguished generals in French annals—were broken open, and their contents scattered to the winds. The embalmed body of Henri Quatre was found in good preservation, shewing the wounds inflicted by Ravaillac. It was thrown, with other remains, into a vast trench, and consumed with quick-lime. The church was plundered of all its jewellery and ornaments, and its carvings were grievously defaced.

The next novelty was an attempt to abjure Christianity, and set up in its stead the worship of Reason. The Convention, however, abstained from this folly. Chaumette and Hébert were the apostles of this new creed, in which they had a powerful auxiliary in Anacharsis Clootz. Through the agency of this triumvirate, there took place a public ceremonial, in which there was a renunciation of the old forms of belief. This was followed by converting the cathedral of Notre Dame into a Temple of Reason. A festival was to take place on each Decadi. The first was held 20th Brumaire

(November 10), and attended by the civic authorities. The goddess of Reason, represented by a young woman dressed in gaudy drapery, with a cap of liberty on her head, and raised on a species of throne, received the homage of the assembled votaries. The Orator of the Human Race was in his glory as a kind of master of the ceremonies. Chaumette delivered an address on the grandeur of the new ideas; and pointing to the goddess as the incarnation of Reason, gave her the fraternal kiss, amidst universal shouts of *Vive la République!* Similar absurdities were enacted in other parts of France. Deputies visited the communes, everywhere seizing and carrying off the church plate, and other objects of value, on behalf of the state. To crown all, marriage was declared a civil contract, which could be broken at pleasure.

With armies on the Rhine and Moselle, in La Vendée, the borders of Spain, Italy, Flanders, and at Toulon, the central power did not relax in its murderous policy, but ever seemed to receive a fresh impulse, whether from military success or defeat. On one pretext or other, Robespierre denounced friends and foes; and Fouquier-Tinville, with increasing zest, recorded the lists of condemned. Ordinarily, the trial of an accused did not last three minutes. Great numbers had only their names called, and were not allowed to speak a single word in their defence.

In the early part of 1794, Barnave, Biron, Malesherbes, D'Espremenil, and other distinguished personages, followed each other in rapid succession to the scaffold. Next in turn were Hébert, Vincent, Ronsin, Momoro, Clootz, and fifteen others, who were charged with trying to bring ridicule on the republic. They were executed

in a batch. On being brought to the scaffold, the Orator of the Human Race preferred to be the last to be guillotined, as he wished to establish certain principles while observing the process of beheading his companions; in which whim he was graciously indulged. The next were Danton, Camille Desmoulins, Lacroix, Hérault de Sechelles, and Westermann. When Danton was seized and put into a cell, he made the remark: 'I now see that in revolutions the greatest rascal lives last.' The whole died with the usual fortitude, April 5, 1794. Next were Chaumette, Gobel (the apostate bishop of Paris), Dillon, and the widow of Camille Desmoulins. There was now a universal despair of life. No one could trust his neighbour. There were in Paris eight thousand prisoners, and more than two hundred thousand throughout France. Crowds of old and young, of both sexes and of every rank in life, were capriciously condemned and executed. The Princess Elizabeth, sister of Louis XVI., perished by the guillotine, 16th May 1794.

Robespierre expressed his strong dislike of the worship of Reason. He professed to be a deist; and by way of shewing his religious feelings, as well as introducing a kind of interlude into the revolutionary drama, he persuaded the Convention to get up a magnificent fête in honour of the Supreme Being. At this fête, which took place 7th June 1794, Robespierre presided, and, by the assembled multitude, was treated almost like a demigod. He, Couthon, and St Just had now unchallenged power. Executions increased in number. For a time, the operations of the guillotine had formed an amusing sight. Bands of women seated themselves round the scaffold, where, in consequence of employing themselves in knitting during the spectacle, they were

familiarly known as *les tricoteuses.* At length, the frequency of the executions, and the streams of blood which had to be conducted to the Seine, gave dissatisfaction, and the place of execution was several times shifted. Twelve hundred and eighty-five persons were guillotined in Paris from the 10th June to the 17th July.

A terrible sense of alarm crept over the Convention. All except two or three members were likely to be proscribed. Tallien, Bourdon de l'Oise, Thuriot, Fréron, Barras, Cambon, and some others, understood that they were marked out as victims. Taking courage, they denounced Robespierre as a monster who plotted their general destruction. It was a daring thing to do; but Tallien succeeded in ordering him to be arrested. Robespierre took refuge in the Hôtel-de-Ville. There, while beginning to write a proclamation to rouse the sections, a party rushed in upon him, and one of them shot him in the jaw with a pistol. Henriot (a leader in the commune), Couthon, St Just, Robespierre the younger, and several others, were also seized. Taken to the hall of the Convention (which was now in the Tuileries), with his broken jaw bandaged, Robespierre lay stretched a helpless object on a table, while, as is said, the clerks inhumanly pricked him with their pen-knives. Condemned to death, he was conducted to the scaffold amidst the vociferous execrations of the populace who had previously been his adulators. This scourge of mankind and his miserable associates, twenty-seven in number, were guillotined 28th July 1794. Next day, a large remainder of his party, numbering seventy-three, were guillotined.

The fall of Robespierre having, according to the republican calendar, taken place on the 9th Thermidor,

the party who accomplished his overthrow are usually spoken of as the Thermidorians. With their ascendency, along with a general conviction that matters had gone too far, the 'Terror' came to an end, and moderate measures ensued. As an act of justice, the Convention caused Fouquier-Tinville to be tried for cruelty: he, Carrier, and fourteen jurymen of the Revolutionary Tribunal, were condemned and executed in less than a week from the fall of Robespierre. Collot d'Herbois, Billaud Varennes, Vadier, and Barère, were condemned to be banished. The Convention forthwith expunged its more outrageous decrees.

The number of persons destroyed one way or other during the revolutionary troubles, has been reckoned to be 1,027,106. The world has nothing to equal this in atrocity; nor is there any such instance of a worthless faction terrifying the general community into submission. The fact is not less curious, that during the worst period of the Reign of Terror, all the theatres and other places of public entertainment in Paris were open and well attended. Another fact was peculiarly characteristic. The conclusion of the Reign of Terror was signalised by a ball, called *Le Bal des Victimes*, only those ladies being admitted who had lost relations by the guillotine; at this brilliant assembly, the favourite mode of dressing the hair was to tie it up as if preparatory for execution.

In September 1794, the whole of the Jacobin Clubs were suppressed. In the general reaction which took place, an effigy of Marat was burned, and its ashes, after being carried ignominiously through the streets, were thrown into a common sewer; subsequently, his body was ordered to be removed from the Pantheon. By the suppression of incendiary clubs, the Convention

had some degree of peace, and was able to attend to the military affairs of the republic. The French armies in the north were continuing their victorious career against the Dutch, the Austrians, and the Prussians; also against the English, who were under the command of the Duke of York. In the Netherlands, the French commander, Pichegru, astonished Europe by his dash and strategy. His most brilliant exploit was that of taking his forces across the Waal, a branch of the Rhine, on the ice, January 8, 1795, when the thermometer was at zero, conquering Holland at a blow, and adding it to the territory of the French republic.

In May 1795, the Convention was exposed to the danger of dissolution by an armed mob, which broke into the hall and dispersed the meeting. Feraud, a young deputy, was struck down, and his head being cut off, was, in Parisian fashion, carried about on a pike. Fortunately, two committees sitting separately were able to defend themselves, otherwise there would have been a return to the Reign of Terror. Resuming its sittings, the Convention proscribed certain members—the remnant of the Mountain—for being concerned in this outrage. Six of them were condemned to death. In going down-stairs from the place of trial, they stabbed themselves in turn with a knife which they had secreted and handed to each other. Two died outright; three others, with streaming wounds, were dragged to the scaffold. With the exception of a few who had gone over to the cause of order, the Mountain was now extirpated—killed off by detachments.

Greatly to its discredit, the Convention left the young dauphin to the cruel treatment of the municipality of Paris. This poor boy had been assigned to the man

Simon, and was treated by him in a manner altogether brutal. Although another keeper was substituted for Simon, the treatment was not materially improved. Confined to a room almost devoid of light and air, and being sometimes days without food, the child sickened and was dying. A physician, by order of the commune, visited him, but it was too late. Faintly murmuring the name of his mother, he expired, 8th June 1795—the death of this innocent child adding one more to the long list of crimes for which the nation is accountable. There is some slight satisfaction in knowing that Simon expiated his cruelties on the scaffold. The only member of the royal family now left was the princess royal. On the 25th December 1795, she was exchanged for some French prisoners in the hands of the Austrians, and lived at Vienna till her marriage, in 1799, with her cousin, the Duke d'Angoulême.

Pondering on the evils which had resulted from rash legislation, the Convention resolved on effecting a change in the constitution. It was perceived that safety would only consist in a division of the legislature into two deliberative bodies; and there was a frank acknowledgment that the union in one chamber of all the orders in the States-general had been a blunder. The new constitution voted was to embrace a *Council of Five Hundred*, and a *Council of Ancients*, consisting of two hundred and fifty members—one body to propose laws, the other to consider, and either pass or reject them. Bills could only pass after three readings, with five days of interval between each. The executive was lodged in five Directors, each of whom was in succession to be president for three months. One-third of both Councils were to retire annually, and also one of the five Directors.

The great mass of the nation regarded with indifference this re-organisation, which was in reality a Revolution. Taking advantage of this state of things, the Royalists began an active agitation, and threatened to carry everything before them at the elections. To prevent this, the Convention determined to appoint two-thirds of the Councils for the first time from among its own members, and only leave a third to be chosen by popular vote. Furious at this, the Royalists, combining with the remnants of the Jacobins, and with others smarting under a dearth of provisions, organised an armed insurrection against the Convention. As this threatened to be a serious affair, the Convention employed General Menou to defend it with troops of the line. Menou proving inadequate, General Barras was appointed with full powers in his stead. Barras procured the assistance of Napoleon Bonaparte, a young officer of artillery, whose military genius he had seen exemplified at the siege of Toulon. Thus accidentally employed, young Bonaparte displayed extraordinary vigour. Skilfully surrounding the hall of the Convention by bodies of troops, he swept the quay of the Tuileries and other accesses with discharges of cannon—he sitting on horseback and directing every requisite movement. The slaughter of the insurrectionists was great, but salutary. The mobs disappeared as if by magic, and street tumults were at an end, 13th Vendémiaire, year IV. (4th October 1795). The Convention closed its sittings on the 25th October, and was succeeded by the new régime of the Directory.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE REPUBLIC—DIRECTORY AND CONSULATE—1795 TO 1804.

THE past six years had left an indelible mark on the country. Châteaux were in ruins; towns half destroyed; churches plundered and shut up, or occupied as stables or dépôts for merchandise; schools deserted, and a generation growing up with little or no education; men of culture, and those who had exercised rule, chased away or killed; persons who had occupied humble stations in life now at the helm of affairs; and a general suffering past description—perhaps worse than all, a universal demoralisation; the decencies of religious observance proscribed and held in derision; the weekly Sabbath obliterated; instead of marriage, a general licentiousness. Indisputably, the revolutionists had rectified many gross abuses—but at what a cost? The immolation of upwards of a million human beings in circumstances of unexampled barbarity, followed by a state of affairs productive of endless national disasters and humiliations.

On entering on office, the Council of Five Hundred presented a list of fifty members, from whom the Council of Ancients was to elect five Directors. The five chosen included two men of note—Barras and Carnot. The

Directory now proceeded to elect a ministry, and to consider that old subject of torment, the finances. The issue of assignats had reached an amount equal to eighteen hundred millions sterling, the exchangeable value of which was not more than about twenty millions. To pay the sum of one franc, a purchaser required to give from a hundred and fifty to two hundred francs in paper. Various attempts were made to redeem the mass of assignats, but all were abortive. The nation acknowledged itself to be bankrupt. Driven to extremity, a forced loan was made, and some money was raised on confiscated property in Belgium. It was in such a condition of things that the civil service was conducted, and a huge military force maintained. As regards the armies, they were, as a matter of necessity, supported mainly by requisitions from the countries they invaded; the doctrine laid down being, that war should support itself—in plain terms, the right of plunder on the line of march.

As a relief to the pressure on the military department, General Hoche pacified La Vendée with some discreet concessions. Prussia had already broken off from the coalition against France, and Spain followed the example by entering into a treaty offensive and defensive with the French, and declaring war against Great Britain, 2d October 1796. The only ally of any consequence which England now had was Austria, which required to be sustained by heavy subsidies. Assailed by a general clamour for peace, Mr Pitt despatched Lord Malmesbury to Paris to negotiate with the Directory. He offered to recognise the Republic, and to give up various conquests, while France should relinquish Holland and the Austrian Netherlands. The proposals were rejected; Lord

Malmesbury returned, and the war continued. General Hoche, with a large force, attempted to effect a landing in Ireland (December 1796), but the fleet was dispersed by a violent tempest, and the vessels returned to France.

While the republican armies were manœuvring, under Moreau, Jourdan, and Pichegru, on the Rhine and the borders of Germany, extraordinary successes were achieved in Italy by young Bonaparte, of whom we must now give some account. The young officer of artillery, who by volleys of grape-shot saved the Convention, and calmed the revolutionary spirit, was not a Frenchman by birth; properly speaking, he was an Italian. Although the date of Napoleon's birth has been the subject of dispute, little doubt seems to be left that he was born at Ajaccio, in Corsica, on the 15th August 1769, shortly after Corsica had been captured by the French. His father, Charles Buonaparte, was a respectable lawyer, who had married an accomplished Italian lady, Maria Letizia Ramolino, by whom he had a family of five sons, Joseph, Napoleon, Lucien, Louis, and Jerome, and three daughters. Napoleon—who changed the family name to Bonaparte—was educated at the military school of Brienne, where he learned to speak French; and here he had for a school companion, M. de Bourrienne, who became his biographer. To complete his studies, he removed to the military college at Paris. The department of the army to which he attached himself was the artillery, which he entered as a junior officer.

Bonaparte's military ingenuity was first demonstrated at Toulon, a fortified seaport, which, as in the case of Lyons, had a distaste for the republic, and endured a siege from the forces sent to subdue it, 1793. The direction of the breaching batteries was assigned

to Napoleon. He resorted to the expedient of taking possession of a high ground commanding the harbour, by which he forced the English and Spanish fleets, which had come to the succour of the place, to retire. The town was forced to capitulate, when, according to Jacobin usage, great cruelties were inflicted on the inhabitants. It was this manifestation of military skill which, as has been seen, procured the young artillery officer an opportunity of saving the Convention from outrage, in October 1795. The overthrow of the Parisian insurrectionists led to a disarmament of the inhabitants. Among other things given up was the sword of Count Alexander de Beauharnais, who had been guillotined as an aristocrat. He had left a widow, Josephine, Madame de Beauharnais, and a son and daughter. Eugène, the son, a boy of ten years of age, presented himself one day to Bonaparte, who had been made General of the Interior, asking him for the restoration of his father's sword. This circumstance led Napoleon to visit Josephine, and an intimacy was formed, which led to their marriage, 9th March 1796.

Josephine was a West Indian. She was born in the island of Martinique in June 1763, and now she was about thirty-three years of age. During the 'Terror,' when she lost her husband, her own life was saved only by the circumstance that Robespierre was guillotined while she was in prison. In this period of detention, she had for companion a lady who afterwards became the wife of Tallien. Through this lady's influence with Barras, the friend of Tallien, Napoleon was appointed to the command of the armies designed for the conquest of Italy, on which expedition he set out only a few days after his marriage. He was at Nice on the 27th of

March, from which one army was pushed across the Ligurian Alps, while the other, commanded by himself, was conducted along the Corniche, a series of rocky slopes bearing an old narrow Roman road on the borders of the Mediterranean.

Now began that brilliant Italian campaign, in which, with two ill-equipped armies, numbering only 36,000 men, Napoleon overcame 75,000 Austrians and Piedmontese. He won his first victories at Voltri on the 11th, and Montenotte on the 12th, and at Millesimo on the 13th April; this last success separated the allied armies; and, finally, his victory at Mondovi on the 22d compelled Sardinia to implore peace. He now hoped to utterly crush the Austrian army under Beaulieu, and at the battle of Lodi, on the 10th May, nearly accomplished it. His opponent did not dare to defend the line of the Mincio, but, hastily throwing a garrison into the city of Mantua, retreated into the Tyrol. Napoleon immediately entered Milan, and took possession besides of all the principal cities of Lombardy. Under orders from the Directory, he commenced to levy contributions in money from the vanquished states, and to bring away articles connected with the fine arts. According to his own account, he sent to France not less than fifty million francs. His officers and commissaries actually seized whatever they wished—provisions, horses, and all manner of stores; and because Pavia ventured to make some slight resistance to the shameful extortions of the Republicans, Napoleon gave it up to pillage for twenty-four hours!

In the course of his Italian campaign, Napoleon took possession of the Legations of Bologna, Ferrara, and Romagna, and afterwards of the March of Ancona; and by a threatened advance upon Rome, he extorted

from Pope Pius VI., by the treaty of Tolentino, 19th February 1797, the surrender of these provinces to the Cisalpine Republic, which he had formed of the conquered states in the north of Italy. Besides these valuable provinces, he exacted a heavy war contribution. The plunder of works of art was a new feature in war. A body of savants, including Monge and Berthollet, were despatched to Italy, to superintend the spoliation of its artistic treasures; and both now and in the subsequent Italian campaigns, pictures, statues, and valuable old manuscripts were carried off in great numbers, to gratify Parisian sight-seers. In this way, Lombardy, Parma, Modena, Bologna, and the States of the Church were savagely harried.

Austria made attempts to recover Lombardy, and the contest was severe during the summer and autumn of 1796. At first the Austrians were successful; but their fortune turned at the battle of Arcola, 17th November, which was won by the daring courage of Napoleon, assisted by Massena and Augereau. The defeat of Rivoli, 14th January, and the surrender of Mantua, 2d February 1797, completed the annihilation of their strength south of the Alps. In March 1797, the French were conducted by Napoleon in the direction of Vienna, and were within only eight days' march from that city, when the Austrian government made overtures of peace; finally, on the 17th October 1797, the famous treaty of Campo-Formio was signed, by which Austria ceded the Netherlands, with the Rhine boundary, Lombardy, and some smaller territories, to France; while, in return, Austria was allowed to take possession of Venice.

While Bonaparte was establishing his military reputation by his brilliant successes, a *coup d'état*, known as

the Revolution of the 18th Fructidor, was effected in Paris. To understand the nature of this political overturn, we must go back a little. The grape-shot of Napoleon, on the 13th Vendémiaire, did not extinguish either the royalists or the Jacobins. It only for a time drove them out of sight; each party waited its opportunity to serve its own purposes. The Jacobins were the first to make themselves heard. A man called Babœuf, who assumed the title of Tribune of the People, edited a paper, in which he advocated an equal distribution of property, and other anarchical doctrines. Meetings of demagogues also began to plan insurrections, with the view of re-establishing a fresh Reign of Terror. By a degree of salutary vigour, in May 1796, Babœuf and other leaders of the party were seized, and brought to trial; some were condemned to death, and several were banished. Still these measures did not attain the desired end. An armed rabble attempted to upset the Directory, expecting that the troops would fraternise with them. In this they were disappointed. The body of insurrectionists was cut down and dispersed by dragoons; those who were captured being disposed of by a military commission.

Ever since the fall of Robespierre, the reactionary feeling had been gaining ground, and by 1797, the counter-revolutionists having a tendency towards royalty had acquired the ascendency. At the same time, the minority in the Councils, and several of the Directors, were men determined to maintain the principles of the Revolution by any means, however violent. Hence grew up a conspiracy to effect a *coup d'état.* The ringleaders were Barras, Lepaux, and Rewbell, three Directors. Shrinking from an illegal act, Carnot took no part in the

enterprise. Talleyrand, who was minister of foreign affairs, was among the most prominent of the instigators. To carry out the object promptly and effectively, General Augereau was appointed to the command of the military division which comprehended the capital.

All parts of the plot being matured, 12,000 troops were marched into Paris, and early next morning, 18th Fructidor, year V. (4th September 1797), headed by Augereau, they surrounded the palace of the Tuileries, meeting with no resistance from the Legislative Guard. The whole affair was over in a few minutes. The minorities soon after met, and proscribed the majorities, members of which fled for safety in all directions. Sixty-three were banished, and all else who had the evil fortune to be caught were imprisoned. To the list of the proscribed, were added the proprietors, editors, and publishers of forty-two journals, amounting to nearly 400 persons. The Councils being now fortified by a fresh accession of deputies of Jacobin principles, proceeded to enact measures resembling those of 1792 and 1793. The public exercise of the Christian religion was again prohibited, and the laws against emigrants and priests, which had been relaxed, were re-enacted in all their rigour. In a word, under the guise of extreme democracy, and with proclamations of liberty and equality, the government was nothing else than an intolerant despotism. It was by the Directory, so revolutionised, that Napoleon was received on his return to Paris from his campaign, in December 1797. Hailing him as a fit agent for extending the conquests of the Republic, he was not the less appreciated for his skill in levying contributions for France, of which, to his credit, he appropriated nothing whatever to himself.

More troubles were reserved for the pope. The year 1797 was marked by a continuance of the same vexatious measures. The Directory ordered the invasion of Rome. Berthier entered the city, 10th February 1798, and took possession of the castle of St Angelo. Pius VI. was now called on to renounce his temporal sovereignty, and on his refusal, was seized, 20th February. He was carried away to Siena, and afterwards to a monastery at Florence; but here the pope, though at an advanced age and in infirm health, was not suffered to rest. On the threatened advance of an Austro-Russian army in the following year, he was transferred to Grenoble, and finally to Valence on the Rhone, where, worn out by the rigour of confinement, he died in August 1799, in the 82d year of his age. Rome, on being occupied, was revolutionised and plundered of all the valuable articles that could be laid hands on. While Italy was suffering from these warlike operations in 1798, Switzerland was overrun and conquered by the French forces, after which it was transformed into the Helvetian Republic, in connection with France.

From this time, for a period of eighteen years, the history of France is substantially a history of Napoleon Bonaparte, on whom, by his military successes, were fixed the hopes of the nation. France, by her generals, had freed herself from all her formidable enemies, except England, which was alone saved by possessing the command of the sea. Even this safeguard might have been unavailing but for Nelson, the greatest of British admirals, who rose to distinction in 1797, and with his fleet watched over the interests of the country. Elated by the victories in Italy, the Directory appeared to form the design of invading England, and appointed

Napoleon commander of the invading army. This, however, was merely a feint to mask the real design of the Directory—the invasion of Egypt, as perhaps a preliminary step to the conquest of British India.

On the 19th May 1798, the expedition for Egypt, consisting of 30,000 soldiers and a body of savants to investigate the antiquities of the country, sailed from Toulon. In its course towards Alexandria, the French fleet arrived at Malta, which was at this time in possession of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, a body of men, half-monks half-soldiers, who had done daring things in the East, but were now sunk in indolence and effeminacy. By a pre-arrangement of bribes, the strong fortress of Valetta, and the whole island, were delivered to the French without even a show of resistance. Securing an immense spoil, which was despatched to Paris, and leaving a garrison with the tricolour flying from the ramparts, Napoleon continued on his way to Alexandria, which was reached on the 29th June. As France was at peace with Turkey, the invasion of Egypt, a Turkish dependency, was, according to every international law, altogether unjustifiable; but to the French that made no difference. Landing with his troops, Napoleon captured Alexandria, and issued an address to the inhabitants of Egypt, stating that the French were 'true Mussulmans,' and came to rescue the country from the domination of tyrants. He then marched on Cairo, where, coming in sight of the Pyramids, he directed the gaze of his troops on those gigantic monuments, saying to them, in a tone of enthusiasm: 'Remember that from the summits of those pyramids forty centuries contemplate your actions!'

At this time, the Turkish authority in Egypt was

greatly controlled by a military body called Mamelukes, consisting originally of slaves from the Caucasus, who, bred to military service, sometimes assumed a domination which threatened to subvert the power of the sultan. A host of these daring soldiers of the desert, eight thousand in number, armed with flashing scimitars, and forming the finest cavalry in the world, made a bold resistance. In vain, by daring charges, they attempted to destroy their assailants; the French infantry, formed into squares, mowed them down on all sides—utterly dispersed and routed them. By this battle of the Pyramids, fought 21st July, Napoleon was made master of Cairo, where he reorganised the civil and military administration. While so engaged, Nelson completely destroyed the French fleet in Aboukir Bay, 1st August, by which the invading force was cut off from Europe. In this naval engagement, ordinarily called the Battle of the Nile, nine French line-of-battle ships were taken, two were burned, and two escaped. The victory was complete, and obtained for Nelson a peerage, by the title of Baron Nelson of the Nile.

A month later, the sultan declared war on the French, and this was followed by disturbances in Cairo, which were only suppressed by horrible massacres. It was evident to Napoleon that he should go somewhere else. Resolving to meet the Turkish forces assembling in Syria, he, in February 1799, crossed the desert at the head of ten thousand men, and stormed Jaffa on the 3d March, after a heroic resistance. Four thousand of the garrison yielded themselves prisoners, on condition that their lives should be spared. Finding it necessary to depart, and that it would be inconvenient to be encumbered with so large a body of captives, the

whole were conducted in groups to the sand-hills on the sea-coast, and there slaughtered by repeated fusillades—an atrocity weighing heavily on the name of Napoleon. Thus disembarrassed, he marched northwards by the coast, and reached Acre on the 17th. Here his career of victory was stopped. All his efforts to capture Acre were foiled by the garrison, assisted by Sir Sidney Smith with a small body of English sailors and marines. On the 21st May, he commenced his retreat to Cairo, leaving the whole country on fire behind him. It was during his absence that Denon and other savants made their valuable researches among the monuments of Upper Egypt.

The condition of Napoleon was now critical. The sultan landed an army of 18,000 men at Aboukir. These the French overthrew with great slaughter on the 25th July, but the victory did not enable them to restore their communications with France. Leaving his army behind him, under command of Kleber, Napoleon sailed from Alexandria, and, after narrowly escaping capture by the English fleet, landed at Frejus on the 9th October. This was a species of flight, which the state of affairs rendered necessary. The government of the revolutionised Directory proved a failure, partly from an inherent defect of organisation, and partly through the corruption of members—the turpitude of Barras, a man of extravagant habits, being most conspicuous of all. It was clear that France could not be reconsolidated by the fag-ends of the Revolution. The power and skill requisite for such a herculean work must be sought for elsewhere, among men who had received a nobler discipline than could be obtained in the political intrigues of Paris.

Such were the thoughts of the Abbé Sieyès, Talleyrand, and Fouché. But where, in the denuded and demoralised state of France, were able men to be obtained? Sieyès turned his eyes to the army, where a host of brilliant names had appeared. Communicating the scheme to Napoleon and a few others, a conspiracy was formed to overthrow the Directory by a *coup d'état*, which was effected by a large military force, on the 18th Brumaire (9th November 1799). This act of violence may properly be deemed the *Third* in the series of Revolutions.

A small number of members of the dissolved bodies who assumed to represent the whole, and had selfish objects in view, promulgated the new constitution. The government was to consist of three Consuls, each elected for ten years, who, from certain electoral lists, were to choose a legislative body, a tribunate, and council of state, all the members of which were to have salaries. The First Consul was to be supreme; the second and third only his advisers. Bonaparte was named First Consul. He was empowered to promulgate the laws, appoint or dismiss ministers, ambassadors, and, with few exceptions, all civil, military, and naval officers. His income was fixed at 500,000 francs. He was now a species of king, and, 19th February 1800, took up his residence in the Tuileries, which had been prepared for his reception. He made a ceremonious entrance to this palace of the French monarchs, which had been a scene of dreadful havoc in the revolutionary tumults. A few Caps of Liberty had accidentally been left on the top of a cluster of spears. 'Take away that rubbish,' said Napoleon, on entering the portal amidst the shouts of the populace.

Josephine, as Madame Bonaparte, presided over the

consular court, for which she was eminently qualified. In figure and in manners she was grace personified, and no one excelled her in the elegance or tastefulness of her dress. Nor was she unacquainted with the rules and etiquette of a court. Her first husband, the Count de Beauharnais, had been a visitor at the palace of Versailles, and, being reckoned one of the handsomest men and the best dancer of his day, he had had the honour of dancing at a ball with Marie Antoinette. Communicating his knowledge to Josephine, he had prepared her to act the part of a queen, and to instruct Napoleon in usages with which his previous life had left him unacquainted. Detesting the Jacobins, whom he had helped to extinguish, he was never tired of hearing her traditions of the old régime, and reminiscences of distinguished personages who had perished during the revolutionary convulsion.

The revival of a court at the Tuileries led to no popular commotion. The revolutionary fervour had died out. The people at large looked on the political change with indifference. Their only feeling was that, with a soldier at the head of the state, there was a chance, for a time at least, of protection from anarchical violence. There were, no doubt, some discontented spirits; but, by dexterous management, the new order of things met with the support of those who might have done it some mischief. French politicians had begun the game of selling themselves to the rising power. The new form of government seems almost to have been invented by Sieyès for the purpose of bribing expectants with places. He had prepared a lucrative post for himself as an ornamental head of the constitution, which Bonaparte at once set aside by turning it into ridicule. His rapacity

was satisfied by the gift of a fine landed estate and a large sum of money in 'requital for his public services.' As Bonaparte liberated many thousands of prisoners, permitted the clergy to open the churches and resume their public official duties, and gave encouragement to education, he commanded, on these grounds alone, considerable support. He also permitted the return of the banished noblesse, and suppressed an annual fête commemorative of the execution of Louis XVI. Fouché, who, with the change of times, had sunk his Jacobin proclivities, was, from his knowledge of worthless characters, appointed minister of police; but, having little faith in his honesty, Napoleon appointed a secret police to watch him.

At the commencement of the Consulate, the French had good reason to speak of the valour of their soldiers. What they had done, with imperfect means and in the face of a world in arms, was truly astonishing. They had acquired the dominion of Italy; they had taken possession of Switzerland; they had made the Rhine the boundary of France; they had been assigned the Austrian Netherlands, now known as Belgium; and were masters of Holland. Such was the work of the republican armies, within the space of five or six years. They had likewise, as in the previous case of La Vendée, suppressed formidable bodies of insurgent royalists in Brittany, known by the name of Chouans, led by Cadoudal and Charette. Deserted by pusillanimous and subsidised allies, England could make no head against French territorial aggrandisements. She could only stand on the defensive, and keep the command of the sea. The French republicans had been frustrated in a landing in Ireland in 1796, but

the attempt was renewed with greater success. Buoyed up with hopes of succour from France, the Irish broke into insurrection; but they were defeated with great loss at Vinegar Hill, 21st June 1798. Two months afterwards, a force of eleven hundred French effected a landing, and, with the aid of Napper Tandy, an Irish revolutionist, attempted to set up a provisional government. Another and greater French force followed, but before it could land, it was attacked and overcome by a British squadron; and the rebellion was, for the time, at an end.

In 1800, the British government, being alarmed at the prospect of a coalition of northern naval powers headed by Russia, resolved on at least depriving Denmark of the means of hostile operation. For this purpose, Admirals Parker and Nelson were sent with a fleet to Copenhagen, which was reached on the 2d April. The Danes exhibited extraordinary valour, but could not withstand the terrific cannonade to which they and their ships were exposed. At the end of four hours, a horrible spectacle presented itself. The Danish fleet was destroyed; some of the ships had been blown into the air, and the water was covered with men struggling for life; others had taken fire, and the flames shooting upwards, cast a fearful glare around. The English, however, also suffered severely. To save further destruction, Nelson offered terms of negotiation, which were accepted. The end of the expedition had been gained, though the proceeding on the part of England has ever been considered somewhat questionable.

The peace between France and Austria was of short duration. When Napoleon was in Egypt, the Directory attacked the neutral states of Switzerland, seized upon

Turin, and deprived the pope of the limited temporal power left him by Napoleon. A second coalition was formed against France, in which Russia was included; and, in consequence, Suwarrow, the famous Russian commander, in conjunction with the Austrians, invaded Italy, and wrested from the French their new conquests in that country. The Austrians could not tolerate the seizure of Switzerland, nor could they agree to certain unwarrantable demands concerning the German frontier; besides, Bernadotte, the French ambassador at Vienna, gave offence by hoisting the inscription, 'Liberty and equality,' in front of his mansion. Again there was war with France, a condition of things far from displeasing to Bonaparte, for there was a prospect of renewing the glories of his Italian campaigns. Making the most careful preparations, he quitted Paris for Geneva, where a force of 36,000 men had been collected. While at Geneva, he visited Necker at his villa of Coppet, where the aged financier was living in a state of moody retirement. On the 15th of May 1800, began Napoleon's celebrated march across the Alps, by way of the Great St Bernard; the army, with immense toil, climbed amidst snow and clouds till it reached the summit, whence it descended on Italy; and before the Austrians were aware, the French had entered Milan. Twelve days afterwards, 14th June, was fought the fiercely contested battle of Marengo, which compelled the Austrians to resign Piedmont with all its fortresses, and for the second time to relinquish Lombardy. Later in the year, hostilities were recommenced; but the Austrians, beaten by Moreau at the battle of Hohenlinden, 3d December 1800, and by Napoleon in Upper Italy, were forced to make peace by the treaty of Lunéville, 9th February

1801. At the same time, in Southern Italy, Murat compelled the government of the Two Sicilies to shut their ports against English vessels, and Soult took possession of a number of fortresses and harbours. Intelligence of these successes caused immense rejoicing in Paris.

France was now more than ever the preponderating power in continental Europe. But beyond that, where ships were concerned, Napoleon's projects had failed. Malta had for two years been blockaded by a British squadron, and was suffering the agonies of famine. Driven to extremity, Valetta capitulated in September 1800; the French garrison being sent to Marseilles, and exchanged for English prisoners of war. By this important event, Malta became, and has ever since remained, a British possession.

A similar disaster overtook the French forces left with Kleber in Egypt. They had gained a victory over the Mamelukes at Mount Thabor, and otherwise defended themselves bravely, but they were isolated in a strange land, cut off from their own country. Their condition inviting attack, Sir Ralph Abercromby was despatched with 27,000 troops to Egypt, and in the face of a storm of missiles effected a landing, 1st March 1801. On the 21st, was fought the battle of Alexandria, in which the French were routed with great loss; but the victory was dearly bought, for the gallant Abercromby received a wound of which he died a few days afterwards. This was noted as the first victory on land gained by the British over the republican forces, and greatly raised the hopes of the people of England. Marching on Cairo, General Hutchinson, who succeeded Abercromby, compelled the French to

capitulate; an agreement being come to that the whole army, including the savants with their collection of drawings and antiquities, should be conveyed to France. So ended the French occupation of Egypt. An English force brought from India, commanded by Sir David Baird, remained some time in the country.

It is now proper to say something of the administrative genius of Napoleon. For military skill he had scarcely a parallel—his foresight, strategy, power of rapid combination, and disregard of personal exertion, being all remarkable. But quite as surprising was his untiring industry, as is attested by his voluminous printed correspondence. Temperate in his habits, he gave no example of profligate indulgence, or wastefulness of time in idle pursuits. His civil rule brought order out of chaos. No doubt, he did so in a despotic fashion. From the day he overthrew the Directory, and was established as First Consul, he was an autocrat. Was France, however, fit for anything else? Responsible government in various shapes had broken down. The country stood in need of a capacious mind to set things to rights, and it found what was wanted in this keen-witted Corsican, who addressed himself to that great object for which he thought he was specially sent into the world.

The abolition of provincial Intendants in 1789, and the inauguration of departmental councils on a basis of popular election, did not in practice prove successful. The councils did as they liked, with little or no regard to the supreme government, and were degenerating into provincial parliaments. Napoleon applied a check to this dangerous state of affairs. By a law of 28th Pluviose, year VIII. (17th February 1800), Intendants were restored under the appellation of Prefects. To

each department, the First Consul appointed a prefect, who could be dismissed at pleasure. To the districts, into which the departments were divided, there were appointed *sous-préfets.* The *conseils généraux* of the departments were likewise appointed by the First Consul; but these councils, during the Bonapartean era, fell into disuse; and the whole provincial administration depended on the ruling power in Paris. In this way was begun that centralised officialism for which France has ever since been noted. Through an organisation of telegraphs, radiating from the office of the ministry of the interior, orders could be communicated to the prefects all over France, and action speedily taken for any required purpose. By these means, the power of Napoleon was prodigiously strengthened and confirmed.

It was also reserved for the Napoleonic rule to give legal sanction to a new and singularly perfect system of weights and measures. As early as 1790, the revolutionary government had turned its attention to this subject, and appointed a commission of men of science, who fixed on the decimal system, or reckoning by tens. The *mètre,* which was to form the standard unit in measuring, was determined by an astronomical calculation of the length of a quadrant of the meridian—a quarter of the earth's circumference from the equator to the pole. The mètre is the ten-millionth part ($\frac{1}{10,000,000}$) of this quadrant, and is a fraction more than thirty-nine English inches. The standard unit of weight was the *gramme,* being the weight of a cubic centimètre of distilled water at 0° centigrade, or 32° Fahrenheit. The most common measure of weight is the kilogramme, containing a thousand grammes, and equal to about $2\frac{1}{5}$ pounds English. Distances are usually reckoned

by kilomètres, or a thousand mètres. This new system was legalised by a decree, 2d November 1801. As regards money, a simple decimal reckoning also came into use, of which the franc is the unit; the franc is divided into ten décimes, and the décime into ten centimes. The franc is nearly equivalent to tenpence sterling. As a coin of convenience, the *napoleon*, a gold coin of twenty francs, was likewise introduced.

The First Consul has more special merit in the matter of readjusting and codifying the laws, which, like everything else in the old monarchy, were in a state of great confusion. The whole were reorganised under the direction of Napoleon. The result arrived at by the assembly of lawyers, over whom he presided, was the *Code Civil*, *Code de Procédure*, *Code Pénal*, and *Code d'Instruction Criminelle*, all of which usually pass under the name of the *Code Napoleon*, which came into use between 1803 and 1810, and remains a lucid embodiment of the law of France.

Bonaparte's rise to power as First Consul led to considerable modification in the political and spiritual condition of Rome, which, in 1800, was restored to the pope. Pius VII., who had succeeded Pius VI., entered his capital in July of that year, and the French troops were withdrawn from the papal territory, excepting the Legations. The cause of these changes was obvious. Napoleon was desirous to restore religion in France, on the ancient basis of a connection with Rome. With this view, he entered into negotiations with the pope, which were agreed to in 1801, and the concordat was ratified by proclamation in 1802. Certain differences, however, remained to be adjusted, which afterwards caused some trouble.

Unfortunately for himself and for the peace of Europe, the great man who was so serviceable in many ways to France, was animated by an insatiable ambition. Whether to bring the British government to terms by a threat, or for other reasons, he projected an invasion of England. He caused a large number of vessels to be collected at Boulogne, and encamped a body of troops on the heights adjoining that town, 12th July 1801. These preparations caused great excitement all over Great Britain. On the 1st August, Lord Nelson was despatched with a fleet to Boulogne, to destroy the flotilla which had been moored in the harbour. This proved a difficult undertaking. The vessels were so well secured, that the effort to reach or damage them was unsuccessful, and Nelson was forced to retire. Further demonstrations of mutual hostility were soon after abandoned, by the signing of preliminaries of peace, 1st October 1801. The treaty of peace, embracing concessions on both sides, was signed at Amiens, 27th March 1802. A short time previously, the French senate declared that Napoleon should be Consul for life.

The peace of Amiens having opened France, after it had been shut against the English for about nine years, large numbers visited Paris, to see the scenes which had been rendered historically interesting by recent events. Peace, however, was of short duration. Napoleon's policy in Italy, and his continued preparations for invasion, so irritated the British government, that, until a better understanding existed, it would not withdraw the forces from Egypt, nor relinquish Malta, as had been stipulated. The obligation was, that Malta should be given back to the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, a body which had been dispersed and provided for; but to

guard against this difficulty, Napoleon was prepared with a fresh batch of knights, created out of his own adherents. As neither party would yield, war was declared against France, 18th May 1803. By an act which has always been considered harsh and unjustifiable, Napoleon made prisoners of war all the English who were at the time in the country. They were sent as *détenus* to Verdun, where, as prisoners on parole, they remained during the continuance of the war, a period of eleven years. On the commencement of hostilities, the British fleet scoured the seas, paralysing the commerce of France, while Napoleon threatened on a larger scale than ever to invade England, and assembled a large army at Boulogne.

Early in 1804, a conspiracy was discovered, having for its object the assassination of the First Consul, and the restoration of the Bourbons. In this conspiracy, unfolded by the discoveries of Fouché, it appeared that Pichegru, Moreau, and Cadoudal, a Breton chief of the Chouans, and others, were concerned. Arrests were made. Pichegru was confined in the Temple, where, one morning, he was found dead. Moreau was banished, and took up his residence in America. Cadoudal was condemned and executed. In the course of the examinations into this mysterious affair, reference was made to a prince, thirty-six years of age, who had taken some part in the conspiracy. Suspicion lighted on the Duke d'Enghien, a descendant of the Great Condé, who was living at Ettenheim, in the state of Baden, about twelve miles from Strasburg. Without a shred of evidence to implicate him in the conspiracy, this young man was seized, though in a foreign territory, by order of Napoleon, was brought to Paris, hurriedly tried during the night by a military commission in the fortress of

Vincennes, condemned to death, and immediately shot, 20th March. This murder remains a foul blot on the memory of Napoleon, who afterwards, on account of it, had to endure the pangs of remorse—for it was clearly demonstrated to him that his informants had been mistaken in their surmises as to the identity of the Duke d'Enghien with the person concerned in the conspiracy.

Now comes a *Fourth* Revolution. The Consulate, like all the governments that preceded it, had not realised expectations. The First Consul thought he might assume the title of Emperor. France, he alleged, wanted an empire as a symbol of permanent security. An appeal was made by a plebiscite to the nation. Upwards of 3,500,000 votes were given for the proposed change; only 3000 or 4000 voting against it. On the 18th May 1804, Napoleon assumed the title of Emperor of the French, at St Cloud. To give his coronation an imposing religious character, Napoleon invited Pius VII. to assist at the ceremonial, and the pope with some hesitation assented. Notre Dame being restored as well as possible after its calamities, and grandly decorated, was appointed for the solemnity. On the 2d December, in presence of the pope, he put the imperial crown on his own head, and afterwards crowned Josephine as empress. The ceremony concluded with the pope officiating at mass. Thus, a people who, in the frenzied pursuit of liberty, dethroned and murdered their king in 1793, now, by universal consent, within a space of less than twelve years, submitted to pass under the rule of a military autocrat.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE EMPIRE—NAPOLEON I.—1804 TO 1814.

ON becoming emperor, Napoleon established his court on a footing of splendour and etiquette outshining that of any court in Europe. His brothers and sisters received the title of Imperial Highnesses. The new order of the Legion of Honour, which had been instituted in 1802, received a great accession. Members of the old noblesse were sought out and cultivated. But, although titular distinction was recognised, the principle acted upon was that merit, not birth, was the sole passport to favour. No general was ever so gifted as Napoleon in selecting and advancing able lieutenants to further his schemes. It became a common saying that 'every soldier carried a marshal's baton in his knapsack.' His court and camp blazed with commanders, the greater number of whom had originally belonged to a humble rank in life. A few instances may suffice.

Junot entered the republican army as a volunteer; his ability and coolness under fire were recognised by Napoleon at the siege of Toulon; he was promoted, rose to be a general of brigade, and was finally created Duke of Abrantes.—Hoche was the son of an undergroom in the royal stables at Versailles; through the kindness of his aunt, a poor woman who kept a

fruit-stall, he was taught to read; he enlisted at sixteen years of age, and rose to be a sergeant-major; by his high military talents, he obtained the command of the army of the Moselle, and drove the allies out of Alsace; he distinguished himself in suppressing the revolt in La Vendée; had the command of the army of the Sambre and Meuse, and effected the passage of the Rhine in 1797, a feat commemorated by a monument on its banks; finally, he became minister of war, and was a prodigious favourite in the salons of Paris.—Murat was the son of an innkeeper, and began life as a waiter at a restaurateur's; he entered a horse-regiment, for which his fine figure adapted him, rose through various grades to be a lieutenant-colonel; Napoleon called him his 'right hand,' for under his orders he executed the most brilliant feats of arms; his fine swordsmanship procured him the name of the *beau sabreur;* he married Caroline, a sister of Bonaparte.—Bernadotte, the son of a lawyer at Pau, entered the army as a common soldier, and, distinguishing himself on various occasions, rose to the highest military rank; ultimately, disliking Napoleon's schemes, he retired into private life, and, for his talents, was elected king of Sweden, when he assumed the title of Charles XIV.—Davout (not Davoust, as commonly written) was one of the few generals of Napoleon who had a good education; by his firmness of character and dauntless courage, he rose to be a marshal and peer of France, with the title of Prince of Eckmühl.—Kleber was the son of a garden-labourer at Strasburg, rose from being a private in the army to be a general of division, and greatly distinguished himself in Egypt; unfortunately, he was assassinated by a fanatic at Cairo, June 1800.—

Moreau served under Dumourier, and displayed such

military talent that he was made general of division; he succeeded Pichegru, won the battle of Hohenlinden, and at all times shewed a noble disinterestedness of character: incurring the suspicion of Napoleon, he was, as has been mentioned, lost to the imperial rule.—Desaix began as a lieutenant of Moreau; in Egypt he was noted for his achievements; incredibly fertile in resources, and possessing a power of winning and retaining the people whom he conquered, he was compared by his soldiers to Bayard.—Massena, a native of Nice, was originally a ship-boy, entered the army as a volunteer, rose to high military rank, and had a chief command in Switzerland and Italy; he died a peer of France.—Soult was originally a private in a royal infantry regiment; in the republican army, by his steady obedience to discipline and coolness in danger, he rose to be general of brigade, and had an important command in the latter years of the war.—Augereau, one of the most brilliant and intrepid of Napoleon's band of generals, was the son of a tradesman; he distinguished himself in the Italian and Austrian campaigns, and rose to be a marshal and peer of France.—Lannes had a similar career; promoted for his ability and services, he rose to high rank, and was finally created Duke of Montebello. It is unnecessary to pursue the enumeration.

Aided by generals of this stamp, and with an army recruited by conscription to any desired amount, Napoleon indulged in dreams of universal conquest. Minute as to examination of details, trusting nothing to chance, he secured, in a wonderful degree, the attachment of his soldiers, who spoke of him as the *petit caporal* (little corporal). Wheresoever he went, they would follow and obey him. History cannot convey a proper idea of the

terror inspired in England by Bonaparte in the early years of the present century. There was nothing of which he was not supposed to be capable. In 1804, and part of 1805, he continued his preparations for invasion, throwing Great Britain into that paroxysm of alarm which covered the country with militia and volunteers, holding themselves ready in case of attack. While his plans for invasion were in progress, Napoleon visited Italy, everywhere receiving profound homage. In the cathedral of Milan—that marvellous work of pinnacled white marble—he was, 20th May 1805, consecrated king of Italy, and he placed on his head the ancient iron crown of the Lombards. His step-son, Eugène de Beauharnais, was at the same time created viceroy.

Returning from this pageant, he again went to Boulogne, to superintend the equipments for invasion. It being of importance to deceive the English as to the time of making the attempt, he ordered the French fleet, under Admiral Villeneuve, to join the Spanish squadron and proceed to Martinique. When they arrived, orders were sent for them to return to the Channel. Meanwhile, Nelson followed them across the Atlantic, and finding them gone, suspected the meaning of the manœuvre, and sending intelligence by quick sailing-vessels to England, immediately hurried back. Villeneuve finding himself intercepted, gave up the attempt to enter the Channel (August 1805). The wrath of Napoleon was unbounded. Without a naval escort, he did not dare to cross with his armament. To Nelson belongs the honour of having baffled his scheme of invasion.

Now was witnessed the vastness of Napoleon's genius. Without appearing to abandon the idea of an invasion,

he proceeded to Paris, where, among other acts, he abolished the fantastical republican calendar, and ordained that France should return to that which is common to the civilised world, on the 1st January 1806. Making all due preparations, he quitted Paris on the 24th September 1805; and with an army of 190,000 men, hurried across France towards Austria, which had now joined in a coalition with Russia, Sweden, and England. Keeping his intended route secret, the different corps of his army took a circuitous line of march to the valley of the Danube; and, after some engagements, drove a large body of Austrians into the fortress of Ulm. As all the points of communication had been seized, and there appeared no hope of succour, General Mack, the Austrian commander, saw no alternative but that of capitulating, which he accordingly did on the 20th October. In the previous encounters 30,000 Austrians had been killed or captured; and now other 30,000 surrendered themselves to the conqueror, sorrowfully laying down their arms as they defiled past him—an incident pictured by artists, and which has only been outdone in recent military events.

The consummate skill with which Napoleon stole to the banks of the Danube, and captured 30,000 Austrians at Ulm, while by the world generally he was believed to be occupying himself on the heights of Boulogne, immensely raised his character as a strategist; though the wonder of such a feat may be lessened by the consideration that at that period intercommunication was slow; weeks being required for the transmission of intelligence which can now be conveyed in at most a few hours. This fact was strikingly illustrated in connection with an event which took place next day

after the capitulation of Ulm, in a different scene of operations.

The British government having resolved to destroy, if possible, the combined fleets of France and Spain, lying in the harbour of Cadiz, sent Nelson on this important service, with Collingwood as his second in command. Keeping the most of his fleet out of sight, Nelson was gratified to learn that the enemy had stood out to sea, at a point near Cape Trafalgar. He then, 21st October 1805, collected his ships, and prepared for an attack on the enemy, which meanwhile had drawn up in the form of two semicircular lines, consisting of thirty-three line-of-battle ships and seven frigates; the front line commanded by the French admiral, Villeneuve. The British force numbered twenty-seven sail of the line and four frigates. The plan of attack was ingenious. It was, to bear down in two perpendicular columns, pierce through the two semicircles, then turn round, and each ship select its antagonist. As the manœuvre had to be effected by sailing-vessels depending on the wind, the exploit was perilous. It proved, however, successful. Nelson was in the *Victory*, Collingwood was in the *Royal Sovereign*.

When all was prepared, Nelson, in his cabin, spent a few moments in uttering and writing a prayer, in which he trusted that 'God would grant a victory to his country for the benefit of Europe, that no misconduct on his part might tarnish it, and that humanity after victory might be the predominant feature in the British fleet!' Just before going into action, he ordered to be hoisted at the mast-head of the *Victory* the ever-memorable signal: 'England expects every man to do his duty.' Nelson leading one column, and Collingwood

the other, now bore down; a furious contest raged, and the enemy's lines were broken. In the heat of the battle, Nelson received a shot from a French marksman. The bullet, passing through the shoulder, lodged in the back-bone, and he was carried below, saying to Hardy, his captain: 'They have done for me at last.' He died with composure at half-past four in the afternoon, the last pleasing intelligence conveyed to him being that the English had been completely victorious. Twenty ships of the line had struck, including that with Villeneuve; several were sunk, and the remainder escaped. More than a week elapsed before the intelligence of the battle of Trafalgar reached England. Immense joy was caused at a deliverance from any further fears of invasion, but a joy chastened with the grievous loss which the nation had sustained by the death of Nelson. The remains of this, the greatest of British naval heroes, were honoured with a public funeral, and deposited under the dome of St Paul's.

The victory of Trafalgar did not in any degree restrain Napoleon in his career of conquest. After the capitulation of Ulm, he marched on without opposition to Vienna, of which he took possession, 11th November. The Austrian forces, under the Emperor Francis, joined by a Russian army, headed by the Emperor Alexander, had retreated to Moravia. Napoleon, quitting Vienna, fixed his headquarters at Brünn, towards which the joint forces marched in five columns to give him battle. The movements of the allies were ill conducted, and the French tactics were misunderstood. The engagement which ensued, fought on the 2d December, and called the battle of Austerlitz, from the name of a small town in the neighbourhood, was most decisive. The lines of

the allies were broken and routed; whole divisions laid down their arms, others were cut in pieces; 2000 men tried to escape by fleeing across a frozen lake, and the whole sunk with a wild cry of despair. Scarcely ever was there so horrible a scene. The allies lost 30,000 in killed, wounded, and prisoners, and abandoned 150 pieces of cannon. The Austrian and Russian emperors escaped in the darkness and confusion. Next day, the Emperor Francis had an interview with Napoleon; and an armistice being agreed on, it was followed by the treaty of Presburg, on the 26th December, by which Austria ceded all her Italian and Adriatic provinces. Other important changes were effected by it; one was the dissolution of the old German empire, dating from Charlemagne, and the other an act dissolving the connection of sixteen princes with Germany, and forming them into a union called the Confederation of the Rhine, in alliance with France.

These stupendous successes were a severe blow to Mr Pitt, whose health had been for some time failing. He died 23d January 1806. The peculiar look which he wore during his last days was pathetically termed by Wilberforce 'the Austerlitz look.' His expiring words, uttered under an apprehension of coming disaster, were: 'Alas! my country!' Had he lived a little longer, he would have had additional cause for despondency. Shortly after the battle of Austerlitz, a French army entered the Neapolitan territory; and having expelled the government of the Two Sicilies, a new kingdom was created, the throne of which was assigned to Joseph Bonaparte (April 4, 1806). Napoleon's return to Paris was a continued journey under triumphal arches. The Parisians received him with the highest honour and consideration;

they melted the bronze cannon taken in his battles, and constructed of them the Column in the Place Vendôme, resembling, in its spiral commemorative figures, the famed Column of Trajan at Rome. Various magnificent buildings were erected. The Rue Rivoli and other new streets were begun about the same period, calculated to improve the appearance of the capital.

As if conscious that a power depending on himself personally was to a certain extent precarious, Napoleon began from this time a process of family aggrandisement. The first prominent example of this policy was that of creating his brother Joseph king of the Two Sicilies; and the next was that of making another brother, Louis, king of Holland (June 5, 1806). By means such as this, he expected to surround France with states dependent on the existence of his own supremacy. The proceedings, as regards the Neapolitan invasion, had been watched by a British force at Palermo, commanded by Sir John Stuart, who resolved to attack the French in Calabria. Landing, accordingly, on the mainland, he had an encounter with a body of French under Regnier, and he was so fortunate as to gain a victory at Maida, 6th July. While this defeat had no perceptible effect on the French, it helped to raise the spirits of the English, and led to increased vigour in prosecuting the war. There was fresh cause for exultation when intelligence arrived that the Cape of Good Hope, a Dutch settlement, had been captured and added to the British crown (January 1806).

From the beginning of the war, the conduct of Frederick-William, king of Prussia, had been wavering and uncertain, and gave satisfaction to neither party. Latterly, by being promised a gift of Hanover, he

assented to an alliance with France, a circumstance which led to the British ambassador being withdrawn from Berlin, and the blockading of the Prussian ports. The king of Prussia soon had cause to rue his subserviency. The French unceremoniously took possession of various Prussian provinces, and levied enormous contributions at pleasure. Great was the indignation expressed at these acts of oppression. A crisis having arrived, war was declared against France, and the queen of Prussia, one of the most high-spirited women of her time, excited the people to resistance by her heroic ardour. It was a hazardous trial of strength—Prussia with deficient preparations and the imperfect generalship of the Duke of Brunswick, against France with her well-equipped army, and her generals highly trained and experienced in field combinations, guided by the great Napoleon in person.

The contest, out of which were to spring the most mighty results, began 27th September 1806. It commenced by an attempt of the Prussians to get between the French and the Rhine, so, as it were, to hem them in by a sweeping strategic manœuvre. In this they so completely failed, that they were themselves cut off from their magazines and base of operations, while the French, if defeated, had a means of retreat. An equally fatal error was committed in mistaking the plans of the enemy, and not being sufficiently vigilant. The Prussians divided themselves into two armies—one under Prince Hohenlohe, stationed near Jena; and the other, with the king of Prussia, commanded by the Duke of Brunswick, at Auerstadt. Bonaparte took the first in hand, and the way it was done shewed his indefatigable energy. In stealing on the position of the

Prussians, he had to ascend the rugged heights of the Landgrafenberg. To permit the passage of his forces, a road had to be cut, rocks blasted, and other difficulties overcome. These operations he superintended personally; sometimes helping with his own hands to drag the cannon up the steepest parts of the ascent. Getting to the top of the heights, the French, early next morning, when the mist concealed their movements, burst down like a torrent on the lines of the Prussians, who were unprepared for the suddenness of the attack. Bravely fighting, they were overpowered by the battalions of Soult, Lannes, and Augereau; and, finally, were routed by the cavalry of Murat. It was a frightful scene of slaughter. The battle of Jena added another to the list of Napoleon's victories.

The detached army at Auerstadt, with the king of Prussia and Duke of Brunswick at its head, was overcome in a manner similarly sudden and unforeseen. The duke was mortally wounded. Prince William of Prussia made a heroic but unavailing resistance. While the battle raged, crowds of fugitives made their appearance from the field of Jena; there was a universal consternation. The Prussians were routed; the king narrowly escaping from being made prisoner. In the two battles of Jena and Auerstadt, fought on the 14th October 1806, the Prussians lost twenty thousand men in killed and wounded, two hundred pieces of cannon, and 346 stand of colours. The fragments of the army scattered themselves over the country without leaders, some taking refuge in towns which were forced to surrender. Vast numbers were allowed to enter Magdeburg, which was forced to capitulate. And an army, under General Blücher, being driven to the Danish frontier, was

compelled to lay down their arms. This extraordinary conquest of Prussia was effected in a few weeks. On the 25th October, Napoleon visited Potsdam, and rifled the tomb of Frederick the Great; and next day he made a triumphal entry into Berlin. Another act of national humiliation consisted in causing the Prussian officers who had surrendered themselves prisoners, to be marched through Berlin towards their place of confinement.

In his general treatment of the nation, Napoleon shewed not the slightest magnanimity. Speaking of the Prussian noblesse, he said, that 'he would render them so poor that they should be obliged to beg their bread.' From the Prussian and Saxon states, he levied a war contribution of £6,300,000; besides which, requisitions on towns, and the plunder of individuals, went on without mercy. Such was the impoverishment of the national treasury, that, to make up the required contributions, families gave up articles of value, and ladies parted with their gold rings, substituting for them rings of Berlin iron, which metal from this time obtained a historic importance in the country. Advancing towards Russia, the French encountered a force at Pultusk; after which, on the 1st January 1807, Napoleon established himself at Warsaw. A winter campaign ensued, in which the French suffered considerable hardship. On the 8th February, they suffered a check at the battle of Eylau. Fighting in various quarters continued until the summer, when by the successes of Napoleon at the battle of Friedland, 14th June, Königsberg fell into the hands of the French, and the Emperor Alexander was disposed to terms of accommodation. Negotiations for a treaty of peace took place, 25th June, on a raft in the river Niemen; and there, Bonaparte, attended by Murat and

other generals, met Alexander and his brother Constantine in the presence of both armies. The neighbouring town of Tilsit, being at the same time declared neutral, became the scene of entertainments and interchange of courtesies.

The treaty of Tilsit is memorable for the humiliating attempts made by the unfortunate queen of Prussia to move the stern purpose of Napoleon. At an interview, she deplored the folly of Prussia in miscalculating her power, when she ventured to enter the lists with such a hero. When the emperor presented a beautiful rose to her, she was inclined to refuse it, but took it with a smile, saying she would like also Magdeburg. The reply was: 'I must observe to your majesty, that it is I who give, and you only who must receive.' The treaty —or, more properly, two treaties—which effected peace between France on the one side, and Prussia and Russia on the other, provided for a variety of readjustments of territory. Prussia ceded certain provinces; a new kingdom was created, called the kingdom of Westphalia, of which Jerome Bonaparte was afterwards appointed king; and on the countries which had been the seat of war, between the Rhine and the Niemen, contributions were imposed to the extent of twenty-four millions sterling. This, with previous exactions and other losses, along with diminished territory, produced in Prussia that bitter sense of wrong which France has latterly had equally bitter cause to regret. By limiting the armed force of Prussia to an insignificant extent, Napoleon expected that the country would remain a poor second or third rate power. As we shall afterwards see, precisely the reverse occurred.

According to French notions, Napoleon's campaign in

Prussia, ending in the peace of Tilsit, was altogether glorious. In a German point of view, the affair, from beginning to end, was the march of an unprincipled band of robbers. Napoleon, certainly, had made a wrongful aggression on Prussia; and his whole acts were marked by gross selfishness and injustice. Unfortunately, the sympathy due to the king of Prussia in his great sufferings is somewhat lessened by the fact of his previously having taken possession of Hanover while in amity with George III.; indeed, it may be said that a hankering desire to absorb Hanover was the cause of all the troubles in which the Prussians were involved. As regards Bonaparte, he had for his aims his own exaltation, based on the ruin of England; as a step to which it was necessary, as he thought, to destroy British maritime commerce, by obtaining a control over all continental ports.

Bonaparte's first operation against the commerce of Britain was the shutting of Neapolitan ports against English merchant vessels; but the Continental System, as his restrictive plan was called, was developed by his Berlin Decrees, 21st November 1806. By these famous Decrees, the British Islands were placed in a state of blockade; every species of commerce and communication with them was prohibited; all articles whatsoever belonging to British subjects were to be seized; commerce of every kind was proscribed; no vessel, coming from England or any of her colonies, was to be received into any harbour; and there were other decrees of an extremely harsh character. The British government retaliated by Orders in Council, to prevent trading with the Continent by neutral vessels. In reply, Napoleon issued his Milan Decree, 17th December 1807, by which

every vessel, no matter of what nation, carrying goods from any British port, might be made lawful prize. It is now considered that the Orders in Council were a blunder, for they only aggravated a national injury. Napoleon's blockade of British ports was practically valueless, because he had no ships by which it could be enforced; while such was the amount of contraband trade that sprung up between the ports of Great Britain and those of the Continent, that the Decrees only caused inconvenience, and an increased cost of merchandise to cover risk.

It was the exceeding misfortune of Denmark to be, for the second time, a victim of the apprehensions of Great Britain. On the ground that the Danish power would be inevitably pressed into the service of France, it was resolved to seize the whole of its fleet; for which purpose a British force bombarded Copenhagen, 2d September 1807, and, forcing it to capitulate, the fleet was delivered up, consisting of eighteen ships of the line, fifteen frigates, six brigs, and twenty-five boats, the whole of which were carried off as prizes to England. Nothing but dire necessity could justify an act so cruel, and opposed to all moral considerations. In the same year, the small island of Heligoland, being captured from the Danes, became a convenient dépôt for British goods destined for Northern Europe, and trade was carried on with it in spite, and often with the connivance, of authorities under French domination.

According to the secret arrangements made between Napoleon and the Emperor Alexander at Tilsit, the two were in a sense to assume the command of the whole of Europe, each in conformity with his own selfish purposes. Alexander was to be free to seize Finland and make

aggressions on Turkey, in requital for which he was to enforce the Berlin Decrees, and to sanction the French conquest of Spain and Portugal. The treaties of Tilsit may be said to have shaped the warlike operations of the next seven years, and to have been the source of Napoleon's ruin. The imperial conqueror, however, did not anticipate any such result.

He returned with his army to Paris, where he was received with bursts of enthusiasm. His Guard, consisting of ten thousand picked soldiers, passed under triumphal arches, and, marching with military music to the Champs-Elysées, sat down to a splendid repast, surrounded by an admiring multitude. Intoxicated with military glory, the Parisians of all ranks were willing to indulge Napoleon in any measure tending to strengthen his autocratic power. With general consent, he abolished the tribunate, a body partly elective, with a right of discussion, and put the council of state, the senate, and the legislative body, on the footing of being appointed by himself, and subject entirely to his own control (August 1807). At the same time, the press was put under a strict censorship, the freedom of the bench was rendered liable to invasion, and the whole of society placed under the surveillance of a secret police. The emperor also reorganised the educational system of the country, by instituting the University of France, which embraced all colleges, lyceums, academies, and schools, and whose officials were little else than a police of different grades, charged with the business of public instruction, under a central authority. In short, the rule of France had worked back to the worst days of Louis XIV. All classes—members of the old noblesse, Terrorists who had catered for the guillotine,

men of letters, men of science, artists—vied with each other in seeking place and pay under the Empire; a fact which greatly strengthens the conviction, that the French have no proper sense of political consistency, or even of self-respect. To crown the imperial edifice, hereditary titles of nobility were re-established, 11th March 1808.

The popularity of the Empire was perhaps partly due to the amount of plunder which it brought to the nation by military conquest. For a number of years, half the public expenditure was derived from war contributions, and an army of upwards of 300,000 men was supported by forced requisitions, into whatever country it penetrated. Thus, under the Napoleonic rule, the French saved half the amount of taxation, and, besides, had the enjoyment of military glory. Vast improvements were also effected in Paris and the provinces. Bridges were erected across the Seine; harbours were created; roads were carried over the Alps and along the Corniche; and various rivers were opened to admit of internal navigation. Of course, the draughts from foreign countries could not last; but it is not customary in France to speculate on the future. Napoleon had still a few countries to lay waste—Portugal and Spain to begin with, and in due time Russia. An alleged disregard of the Berlin Decrees was the plea for hostilities. Junot, with a strong force, entered Portugal; and the royal family taking fright, embarked for Brazil, 27th November 1807. Spanish fortresses were seized in February 1808; and in May, Napoleon obliged the royal family of Spain to relinquish the sovereignty in his favour. Joseph Bonaparte was transferred from the throne of Naples to that of Spain, his place at Naples being assigned to Murat.

Soon after plunging into the Peninsular War, Napoleon began to apprehend that, with so many of his forces engaged in Spain, the German States, smarting under mortifications, would take the opportunity of renewing hostilities. With feelings of this nature, he deemed it prudent to draw closer his alliance with Russia; for which purpose he sought an interview with the Czar, who, for reasons of his own, was desirous to remain for the present in amity with France. This memorable interview took place at Erfurth, a town situated a few miles from Weimar, 27th September 1808, and was signalised by every appearance of cordiality, along with a succession of brilliant fêtes. By the conference, which lasted above a fortnight, the two emperors mutually agreed on maintaining an intimate alliance, though each secretly, as it afterwards proved, entertained the resolution to break the engagement at the earliest opportunity, and commence a deadly war against the other.

The seizure of Spain was Napoleon's first step in a downward direction. Insurrections broke out in Madrid, and armed resistance took place in various parts of the country. The most strenuous of all the efforts of the Spaniards, unassisted by foreigners, to defend themselves against the French, was at Saragossa, the capital of Aragon. Calling on Palafox, a young and intrepid nobleman, but without any special knowledge of war, to head them, the inhabitants bade defiance to the French, under General Lefebvre. The city was invested in the middle of June 1808; and after a siege of two months, for fifteen days of which it was incessantly bombarded, the enemy was forced to retire. It was in vain that by fresh attacks a breach was made and a lodgment effected; every convent, every house was a

separate fortress; every partition-wall was a new line of defence—women, as well as men, heroically fighting inch by inch, and driving back their opponents at the point of the bayonet. In the end of November, the French returned in greater force, and the same obstinate resistance was maintained till the 21st February 1809, when the unfortunate city was obliged to surrender. In the terrific strife from first to last, 54,000 Spaniards had perished, and only 9000 were left capable of bearing arms. The defence of Saragossa will ever be memorable for the extraordinary heroism displayed by all classes of its inhabitants.

While Saragossa was enduring the horrors of a siege, a regular Spanish force took the field, and, by the battle of Baylen, 19th July 1808, compelled Dupont, with a French army, to render themselves prisoners. Such was the commencement of the Peninsular War, in which the British government felt it to be a duty to take a part, in the hope of shattering the power of Napoleon. In aid of the Spaniards, Sir John Moore was despatched with a military force, and he made a bold advance from Salamanca to attack Soult, when he learned that a much larger force was marching to crush him. With an army numbering 25,000 men, he found it necessary to retreat over a rugged country for a distance of 250 miles towards Corunna, closely followed by the enemy. It was impossible to embark without fighting, and Soult was in readiness to attack as soon as the troops should begin to embark. On the 16th January 1809, the French came on in four strong columns. A desperate engagement, known as the battle of Corunna, ensued. While animating the 42d Regiment in a brilliant charge in an

early part of the action, Moore was struck by a cannon-ball on the left shoulder, and died in the moment of victory. The French were defeated with a loss of 2000 men; but the English, in their embarrassment, were obliged to embark as they best could. Their last act before embarkation was to perform the funeral obsequies of the lamented General Moore.

Austria had been thrice worsted by Napoleon, and was doomed to suffer a fourth humiliation. Anxious to recover its lost position, it took advantage of Napoleon's immersion in the Spanish war, prepared for hostilities on a large scale, and finally entered the field on the 8th April 1809. Enraged, but not astonished, Napoleon collected his forces, consisting of 325,000 men, divided into eight corps, under Lannes, Davout, Massena, and others, which he despatched to the valley of the Danube, and followed personally, as supreme commander. The campaign was brief and remarkable. On no occasion did Bonaparte ever shew such extraordinary skill in overcoming an enemy by strategic movements. The Austrians, though well commanded by the Archduke Charles, suffered a succession of heavy losses at Abensberg, Eckmühl, and Ratisbon, 18th to 22d April 1809, and were forced to leave the way open to Vienna, the neighbourhood of which was reached on the 10th May, after an ineffectual resistance. There was a difficulty in crossing the Danube, which led to the tremendous conflict at Wagram, 5th and 6th July, in which the French were victorious. Bonaparte now entered Vienna as a conqueror, and though resistance was kept up for a time by a body of brave peasants, under Hofer, in the Tyrol, negotiations of peace were opened. The terms were as humiliating to Austria as

those previously dictated to Prussia—loss of territory, reduction of military power, a crushing war indemnity, and, as a last memento, the blowing up of the walls of Vienna.

Returning to Paris crowned with victory, only one sorrow preyed on Napoleon's mind. Josephine had borne him no children, and, to perpetuate his dynasty, he formed the scheme of divorcing her, and forming another alliance. Josephine had long foreboded this indignity, and the thought of it embittered her existence. The day came in which the emperor intimated to her the change required by his 'destiny.' The blow was terrible, and she fell to the ground in a swoon. The divorce was speedily effected by a formal decree. Josephine, whose character was spotless, retired with a suitable provision into private life. As had been previously arranged, Bonaparte was married, on the 10th April 1810, to Marie-Louise, daughter of the emperor of Austria.

Hitherto, as has been seen, Napoleon had gone on with scarcely a check from conquest to conquest; and the notion prevailed that he was invincible. On but few occasions had a British land-force been able to oppose the French. It was only when the English were thoroughly roused, and committed an army with full powers to Sir Arthur Wellesley, that Bonaparte may be said to have met with his match. When General Wellesley, whose military genius had been displayed in India, was despatched with a force to the Peninsula, Napoleon contemptuously spoke of him as a 'sepoy,' and his soldiers as 'leopards.' Wellesley speedily shewed, by several strategic movements, that he was a foe not to be contemned. His passage of the Douro,

in face of a formidable enemy, followed up by his victory at Talavera, 27th and 28th July 1809, procured him the thanks of parliament, and he was created a peer (4th September) by the title of Baron Douro and Viscount Wellington, with a pension of two thousand pounds. Unable to encounter superior numbers, Wellington, on the 30th September 1810, took refuge within the famous lines of Torres Vedras, near Lisbon. By means of these intrenchments, which he had prepared with incomparable judgment and foresight, he compelled Massena to retreat with heavy loss; he was also enabled to protect Portugal, whence, the following year, he issued on that career of slow and hard-won victory which ended in the expulsion of the French from the Peninsula. Great as this war was, and still is, considered in England, Napoleon appears to have treated it as a thing of inferior moment. Absorbed in the fancy of crushing England by means of the Berlin Decrees, he, in 1810, dispossessed his brother Louis of the kingdom of Holland, on account of his alleged laxity in carrying out the continental system, and added the country to the French Empire. About the same period, the French experienced fresh losses of colonial possessions. The British captured Cayenne and Martinique in 1809, Guadeloupe and Mauritius in 1810, and Java in 1811.

Throughout 1811, Napoleon was deeply engaged in schemes of a most oppressive nature. Pius VII., who had assisted at his coronation, was poorly requited for that act of complaisance. His dominions had been seized and added to the kingdom of Italy in 1809; and because he protested against this act of aggression, he was now taken captive, and, like his predecessor, removed

first to Florence, and then to Grenoble, where he and his attendants were put on a miserable allowance of two shillings a day! Ultimately, in 1812, the pope was transferred under restraint to Fontainebleau. Domineered over, Lucien Bonaparte sought a refuge in England, where he occupied himself with literary pursuits. Joseph Bonaparte, who had been placed on the throne of Spain, was treated with such contumely, that he wished to resign. The state prisons of France were crowded by victims who had been seized by arrests as arbitrary and secret as the *lettres de cachet* of the old monarchy. Proceedings so unjustifiable incurred no public remonstrance. Napoleon continued to be the object of general adulation; and when the Empress Marie-Louise gave birth to a son, 20th March 1811, extraordinary rejoicings signalised the happy event.

On the plea that the Continental System was not properly carried out, Napoleon, in 1811, seized the free towns of Hamburg, Bremen, and Lübeck, the duchy of Oldenburg, and other small states in that quarter. The Emperor Alexander resented so deeply the robbery of his brother-in-law, the Duke of Oldenburg, that he resolved to disregard the continental blockade against British manufactures; and the steps he took vastly incensed Napoleon. As the ruin of England was his paramount idea, he now felt there was only one course open for him to pursue, which was to make preparations for the invasion of Russia. When such intentions became known, his friends were filled with consternation. Dissuasions of counsellors were vain. He spoke of his 'destiny'—a favourite Napoleonic phrase which was made to cover every ambitious delusion. 'His destiny,' he said, 'was not yet accomplished; he had

to make one nation of all the European states, and Paris must be the capital of the world!' Accordingly, he rushed headlong on his fate.

Space is not afforded us for going into a narrative of the disastrous Russian campaign, of which detailed accounts are given by Labaume and Segur. Only a few facts can be offered. To reach Moscow, the French army required to march eighteen hundred miles through countries where there was a difficulty in procuring and transporting provisions. Large rivers flowed at right angles with the line of march. The Rhine, the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula could be crossed by bridges; but the Niemen, the Beresina, the Dnieper, and some others, would require to be forded by men, horses, and wagons, and probably under the fire of an ever-vigilant and indignant enemy. Altogether, the enterprise was gigantic and hazardous. There had been nothing like it in modern history. Gathering together that part of the army which France was to furnish, it was despatched in an easterly direction into Germany, where it was to unite with the levies drawn from Italy, Austria, Prussia, Saxony, Bavaria, Poland, and the other countries over which Napoleon exerted a control. From different directions, this immense force, under able generals, drew towards a central point on the Oder, whence all were to combine in a united attack on the Russian frontier.

Napoleon set out from Paris on the 9th May 1812, to superintend the war in person. His army consisted of several divisions, which generally moved at one or two days' distance from each other, on different points. On the extreme right were 34,000 Austrians, commanded by Prince Schwarzenberg; on the left was Jerome Bonaparte, king of Westphalia, at the head of 75,200

Westphalians, Saxons, and Poles; by the side of these was Eugène de Beauharnais (viceroy of Italy, and step-son of Napoleon), with 75,000 Bavarians, Italians, and French; next, the Emperor, with 220,000 men, commanded by Murat, king of Naples, and Marshals Davout, Oudinot, and Ney; and, finally, in front of Tilsit, was Marshal Macdonald, with 32,500 Prussians, Bavarians, and Poles. These, with some others not enumerated, amounted to 480,000 men actually present; besides which, many thousands were collected and kept in reserve. Of this large force, 400,000 were infantry, or soldiers on foot, and 80,000 cavalry. Along with this enormous force, there were thousands of wagons carrying provisions, thousands laden with gunpowder, shot, and shells, and thousands designed to accommodate the sick and wounded. The artillery consisted of 1372 pieces of cannon. For drawing the wagons of various kinds, and the cannon, about 100,000 horses were employed; and to supply food for these poor animals, thus brought into a service of danger and fatigue, independently of those used by the 80,000 cavalry, a most extensive system of foraging was required.

To encounter this enormous host, Alexander, with an army of 300,000 men, presented at first a passive resistance. Bands of Cossacks—a wild irregular cavalry from the southern deserts of Russia—hovered over the line of march to cut off stragglers and foraging parties; towns and villages were laid waste, and crops were destroyed. The French, advancing through a desert, and with a loss of a third of their number from famine, fatigue, and slaughter, reached, on 18th August, the fortified city of Smolensk, which, when captured, after a desperate engagement, was found

only a heap of smoking ruins. Dismayed and perplexed, Napoleon continued the march to Moscow. On the 7th September was fought the battle of Borodino, when 12,000 French were killed, and 38,000 wounded. The route was now open to Moscow, which the French reached on the 14th September. To the extreme surprise and mortification of Napoleon, no deputation arrived to sue for terms of surrender. The city was deserted by all but a few resident French, and numerous bands of vagabonds let loose from the prisons. By these liberated criminals, houses in various quarters were set on fire, and soon the whole of this ancient capital of Russia was in a state of conflagration.

The burning of Moscow was the most extraordinary event in the great French war. Napoleon took up his quarters in the palace of the Kremlin, but that also was set on fire, and with difficulty saved from destruction. The situation of the whole invading force was most critical. They could neither stay nor advance. Napoleon sent repeated messages to Alexander proposing terms of accommodation, but they were disregarded. The pillage of the ruined city furnished a variety of luxuries, but there was a growing scarcity of provisions; horses, dogs, and cats formed the principal articles of food. Entirely discomfited, Napoleon, after, by a needless act of vengeance, blowing up the remains of the Kremlin, retreated from Moscow on the 18th October —his army a disorganised mass, contending with cold and hunger, and every day expecting to encounter the horrors of winter. On the 6th of November, the snow began to fall, and the march was amidst a scene of frightful desolation. Men and horses sank in snow-pits, and dropped by the way-side to die. Hovering in the

distance were the Cossacks, who seized every opportunity to impede and destroy. Overhead were flights of vultures.

Immense losses by drowning and slaughter were suffered in crossing the Beresina. The personal safety of the emperor was now the chief object of solicitude. The surviving officers formed themselves into a sacred squadron for his protection, in the midst of which he walked laboriously forward, staff in hand, and clad in a large cloak lined with fur. At Smorgoni, on the 5th December, he left the army, to which he could no longer be of any benefit, and assigned the command to Murat. Command, however, there was none. Left by the emperor, the army lost all sense of discipline. Generals, inferior officers, and common soldiers were all seized with the instinct of self-preservation, and refused to obey orders. What little remains there were of generous or soldierly feeling in the army, were now entirely lost: hunger, cold, and despair had reduced the heroes of the Grand Army to a horde of savages. Out of the whole army, only about 25,000 reached Russian Poland, and finally, only a mere handful arrived in France. Travelling by sledges, Napoleon reached Warsaw; and he got to Paris on the 18th December—a miserable fugitive.

The failure of the Russian campaign caused some consternation in France, but led to no want of confidence in Napoleon. To maintain his sway, fresh levies of conscripts were cheerfully granted; and the army, notwithstanding losses in Russia and Spain, amounted, early in 1813, to 800,000 infantry, 100,000 cavalry, and 100,000 artillerymen and engineers—in all, one million of men. The Russian disaster was hailed with shouts of exultation all over Germany and the

north of Europe; and forthwith a coalition was formed for deliverance from French domination. Taking the field with his accustomed ardour, Napoleon was for some months successful in winning battles—at Lützen, 2d May 1813; Bautzen, 21st May; and Dresden, 24th to 27th August: but the resolute temper of the allies, who knew that he was playing his last card, made these victories almost fruitless. They were convinced that one grand defeat would neutralise all his triumphs. This was inflicted, after several minor defeats, at Leipsic—the great 'Battle of Nations,' as it has been called—16th to 19th October 1813. In this memorable battle, the victory of the allies was complete. Napoleon commenced his retreat, followed by the allies. When he recrossed the Rhine, he had only about 70,000 men left out of 350,000, with whom he began the contest. All the French garrisons in the Prussian towns were compelled to surrender. For these successes of right over might, there were great rejoicings in England, which had additional cause for exultation, for Wellington was rapidly driving Soult, with a French army, out of Spain.

Napoleon, however, did not despair. With a mind rising to the occasion, he raised a fresh conscription, said to be of 300,000 men; but such had been the drainage of the male population, that the conscripts were chiefly youths who were scarcely able to bear arms or encounter the fatigues and dangers of a campaign. With such a force as was at his disposal, he proceeded in the attempt to drive the allies out of France. The skill and energy which he displayed were extraordinary, but unavailing. On the 30th March 1814, the allied Russian and German forces captured Paris after a severe engagement; and next day the Emperor Alexander and

the king of Prussia entered the city amid the shouts of the populace. On the 2d April, the senate, by a decree, dethroned Napoleon, and relieved the army and the people from their oaths of allegiance. The emperor abdicated on the 4th at Fontainebleau. The French, with their usual fickleness, appeared to be delighted to get rid of the Bonapartean dynasty, which for the last ten years they had abjectly worshipped. Napoleon was allowed by the allied powers to retain the title of emperor, with the sovereignty of the island of Elba, and an income of 6,000,000 francs, to be paid by the French government. A British ship conveyed him to Elba, where he arrived on the 4th May. If the allied powers had permitted, Josephine would have rejoined him after his fall. She died shortly afterwards, 29th May 1814. Marie-Louise had previously returned to Vienna, taking her son with her; and from this time they dropped out of public notice.

It only remains to be mentioned that, meanwhile, Wellington had been carrying on a very trying but successful campaign in the Peninsula. On the night of 19th January 1812, he carried the fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo by storm; for which act he again received the thanks of parliament, with a further pension of £2000 a year, and was advanced to be Earl of Wellington. He carried Badajos also by storm, after a frightful carnage, on the 6th March; and on the 22d July, he gained the battle of Salamanca, one of his greatest military triumphs, for which he was invested with the title of Marquis. Next year, 1813, he gained the battle of Vitoria, on the 21st June, by which signal victory the power of the French in Spain was greatly broken. On the 25th July, he carried San Sebastian by assault.

Following up these successes, Wellington drove the French out of Spain, 27th February 1814, and pursued them to Toulouse, where he consummated his brilliant victories over Soult. The allied Russian and German armies having entered Paris, and Napoleon having signed his abdication a few days before, this last battle would not have been fought, but for the non-arrival of intelligence regarding the momentous events at Paris. For his important services, Wellington was raised to a dukedom, and received an additional grant of £400,000, with, for the thirteenth time, the thanks of parliament.

The treaty of peace, signed at Paris in 1814, was followed in December the same year by the treaty of Ghent, which secured peace between Great Britain and the United States, after an unhappy war of two years between these two countries concerning the right of search. Thus in 1814, the people of England had cause for rejoicing; they were, at length, after a long and complicated contest, able to devote themselves to the arts of peace.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS—LOUIS XVIII. AND CHARLES X.—1814 TO 1830.

WHEN the allies took possession of Paris, they had formed no plan respecting the government which should succeed the rule of Napoleon. The Emperor Alexander, who took the principal command of the army of occupation, magnanimously allowed the French people to make their own selection. There was a general current of feeling for a restoration of the Bourbon dynasty; and Talleyrand, with his accustomed shrewdness, gave matters a turn in that direction. The senate, by what may justly be termed a *Fifth* Revolution, decreed France to be a hereditary monarchy, and, in the name of the French people, called Louis-Stanislaus-Xavier, eldest surviving brother of Louis XVI., to occupy the throne. The decree embraced articles for securing a national legislature, freedom of the press, liberty of conscience, equality of taxation, and other guarantees of a constitutional government. Charles, Count d'Artois, until the arrival of his brother, the king, from England, where he had been residing for a number of years, acted as lieutenant-general of the kingdom. This recall of the Bourbons met with

universal approval. The white cockade of the old monarchy was for a time the fashionable wear.

The newly appointed king, adopting the style of Louis XVIII., entered Paris on the 3d May, amidst the acclamations of the people, escorted by the Old Guard of Napoleon, and surrounded by the marshals of the Empire. He first proceeded to the cathedral of Notre-Dame to offer a thanksgiving for his restoration; and then repaired to the palace of the Tuileries, of which he took possession as the legitimate owner. He was accompanied by the Duchess d'Angoulême, daughter of Louis XVI., who was so affected when she entered the palace, which she had quitted under such terrible circumstances on the 10th August 1792, that she fainted and fell at the feet of her uncle. On the 14th May, a funeral service took place in Notre-Dame in memory of Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, and the Princess Elizabeth; the imposing solemnity being attended by the members of the royal family and all the monarchs, generals, and ministers of state in Paris. Some months afterwards, the remains of the royal martyrs were exhumed, so far as they could be identified, and ceremoniously transferred to St Denis. About the same time, from the turn which affairs had taken, Pius VII. was suffered to quit Fontainebleau, and resume his position at Rome.

Born in 1755, Louis XVIII. was now fifty-nine years of age. He was a widower, and without children. Bulky in figure, he had no genius, not even the tact to conciliate the people over whom he was called to rule. He and his brother, the heir-apparent, had never done a single thing of any use to France, but very much the reverse; for by their conduct as emigrants they had

intensified the revolutionary sentiment against royalty. The restoration of the Bourbons was perhaps unavoidable in the circumstances. It was nevertheless a great misfortune that Louis and his brother were so ill-suited to their new position. Bigoted and prejudiced, they had learned nothing, and forgotten nothing. Content to be restored by the will of the French people, they speedily let it be known that they came back by inherent and divine right. At the very outset, therefore, they gave offence, and prepared the way for the expulsion of the dynasty.

Taking the decree of the senate as the basis of a constitution, Louis XVIII., as an act of condescension, gave the French a constitutional charter (June 4), which assimilated the government as much as possible to that of Great Britain—a king with responsible ministers, a Chamber of Peers nominated by the king, and a Chamber of Deputies elected by qualified voters; freedom of the press within certain limits, liberty of conscience, and equality of taxation. The king, however, reserved the sole power of initiating laws, and the right to 'make regulations and ordinances necessary for the execution of the laws and the safety of the state.' It was evident, with such a power, the crown could at any time find an excuse for acts of the most arbitrary nature; and such proved to be the case. As Louis XVIII., with all his prejudices, had a fund of good-nature, he probably might have been less exacting, had he not allowed himself to be advised by the Count d'Artois, who sought in all things to restore the system in vogue before the Revolution. Much discontent was caused by the dismissal of the tricolour and resumption of the white national flag. It was beyond the power of the

Bourbons, however, to abolish the *Code Napoleon*, to bring back the old system of weights and measures, or to make any serious change in the departmental system. A proposition was made to indemnify the losses to families caused by revolutionary violence; but that was laid aside as impracticable; all that the Chambers could do was to restore to their rightful owners all domains not yet alienated.

There was much to adjust as regards the boundaries and the external relations of France, all which matters were referred to a congress of allied powers to sit at Vienna. The congress did not commence its proceedings until 29th July, for the allied sovereigns, after quitting Paris, had paid a ceremonious visit to London. By the Congress of Vienna, considerable changes were made on the German States. Holland and Belgium were united into one kingdom. The king of Holland, now designated the king of the Netherlands, acquired also the title and rights of Grand-duke of Luxembourg. Holland ceded to Great Britain the Cape of Good Hope, Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice. With a lavish generosity, which has often been condemned, Great Britain relinquished Java; and that splendid possession exchanged the beneficent rule introduced by Sir Stamford Raffles for the mean, grasping tyranny of the Dutch. The possession of Malta was confirmed to Great Britain. Switzerland resumed its former character; as likewise did Spain and Portugal. France was restricted to its boundaries before the Revolution. While, during March 1815, the congress was discussing the conflicting claims of Murat and the dispossessed branch of the Bourbons to the throne of the Two Sicilies, an abrupt stop was put to further proceedings, by the startling

intelligence that Napoleon had secretly left Elba, that he had landed at Cannes on the 1st March, and that, joined by General Labedoyère and the garrison of Grenoble, he was marching on Paris. Russia, Prussia, Austria, England, and other allied powers promptly prepared for hostilities.

On his way to Paris, Napoleon distributed proclamations fitted to win the population, and particularly the army, to his cause. He said he had come to restore the liberty of 1790; to secure all the results of the Revolution; to uphold the proprietors of the national domains threatened by the Bourbons; to raise again the national colours; and to obtain an equality of rights to all. The soldiers everywhere revolted to him. At Lyons, he issued several decrees dissolving the chambers, and already acted as if he were at the head of the government.

The news of Napoleon's landing excited a prodigious sensation in Paris. Louis XVIII. addressed the Chambers in a fervent speech, declaring his attachment to the charter, which he would ever maintain in its integrity; and similar sentiments were uttered by the Count d'Artois. For a few days, there was every appearance of steadfast loyalty. The marshals, including Soult and Ney, and all the dignitaries of the state, tendered to the king their support and allegiance. Alas! for the infirmity of French oaths and promises! Ney accepted the command of the troops concentrating at Lons-le-Saulnier to arrest the invasion; and at his audience, on taking leave, he said to Louis: 'Sire, I will bring back Bonaparte in an iron cage.' 'Good-bye, marshal,' replied the monarch; 'I rely on your honour and fidelity.' Within a week, Soult and Ney gave their

adhesion to the cause of Napoleon, carrying with them the whole of the troops under their command! After this flagrant defection, Louis could not with safety remain in Paris. At midnight on the 19th March, he set out on his melancholy flight towards Lille, whence he retired to Ghent. On the 20th, Napoleon entered the Tuileries; and such was the enthusiasm of his welcome, that he was literally borne by the crowd up the staircase of the palace, with cries of '*Vive l'Empereur.*'

This fervid reception did not meet with the general sympathy of the nation. There were fears of a second military invasion, and many consequent troubles. By the advice of Fouché, whom it was necessary to propitiate, Napoleon tried to stimulate popular favour by convoking an assembly of delegates from the departments, with marshals and civil dignitaries, on the Champ de Mars, on the 1st of June. At this assembly, arranged with proper dramatic effect, after making one of his bombastic orations about Liberty and France, he placed his hand on the Gospels, and took an oath to observe the constitution. The ceremony concluded by a distribution of eagles to numerous regiments. To conciliate the Chambers, he subsequently consented to various modifications in their favour. Great military preparations were at the same time made by Napoleon for undertaking a campaign against the allied forces, full accounts of which were secretly and treacherously forwarded by Fouché to Wellington, by which means the allies knew in what direction the encounter was likely to take place.

The plan formed by Bonaparte was, to hurry with his army into Flanders, and attack the English and Prussians before the Russians and Austrians came up

to their support. So rapid were his movements, that he encountered the army of the Prussians under Blücher before the English army under Wellington could join him in sufficient force. On the 16th June, Napoleon defeated the Prussians at Ligny; a portion of his army, on the same day, attacked at Quatre Bras a British force which had been hastily collected, and which, though it held its ground, was compelled, on the retreat of the Prussians, to fall back on the 17th to Waterloo.

The battle of Waterloo—the culminating conflict in the protracted French war—was fought on the 18th June 1815, and has been so frequently described that a few particulars regarding it will here suffice. Napoleon brought to the field about 75,000 men, for the most part consisting of old and tried soldiers, led by Ney, Soult, Kellerman, and other skilled generals. The Anglo-Netherlands army amounted to nearly the same number, of which only 25,389 were British. The Prussians, under Blücher, who arrived on the field of Waterloo only towards the close of the engagement, numbered 35,000. Viewed in comparison with recent battles fought between the French and Prussians, the battle of Waterloo was only a second or third rate combat, though as momentous in its results as any contest in modern history. The two greatest strategists of the age, Napoleon and Wellington, were confronted on nearly equal terms. Victory was at first doubtful, but the appearance of the Prussians decided it in favour of Wellington. The French, horse and foot, were thoroughly routed, and Bonaparte turned and galloped off, accompanied by a few followers. The loss of killed and wounded by the British and their auxiliaries, was upwards of 15,000, and the Prussians lost on the

whole nearly 7000; while the French lost 35,000, with several thousand prisoners. The intelligence of the victory caused the greatest delight all over Great Britain. The power of Napoleon was now believed to be prostrated past all hope of recovery; but, for the sake of security against any further outbreak, there was a resolution to adopt the most severe, though exceptional measures.

There was still a possibility of gathering together some scattered forces, and making a stand against the allies. The fallen emperor, in his abject condition, did not attempt any movement of this kind; but hurrying to Paris, endeavoured to persuade the Chambers to sanction new levies of troops on behalf of himself and the nation. All his efforts and those of a few steady supporters were fruitless. One of a committee of the Chambers who had been appointed to consider the unfortunate position of affairs, protested against any renewal of confidence in Bonaparte. His arguments were overpowering. 'Dare any one,' said he, 'accuse France of fickleness or want of fidelity with regard to Napoleon? She has only been too faithful to him, as the bones of her sons on the sands of Egypt, on the frozen deserts of Russia, on fifty battle-fields, can testify. In a space of ten years, three millions of Frenchmen have perished for a man who would still keep Europe in a state of convulsion. We have done enough for him. Our duty now is to save the country.' In correspondence with these sentiments, a deputation, headed by Lafayette, waited on Napoleon to request him to abdicate. He hesitated, but next day, the 22d of June, he signed a document abdicating the throne. After referring to efforts to 'maintain the national independence,' he said:

'Circumstances appear to me changed. I offer myself as a sacrifice to the hatred of the enemies of France. My political life is terminated, and I proclaim my son, under the title of Napoleon II., Emperor of the French.'

The Chambers received the missive with much satisfaction, but took no heed of the qualification respecting Napoleon II., in whose name, however, some acts are alleged to have been recorded. A provisional government was formed to treat with the allies. Some of his old friends still counselled Napoleon to fight for his dynasty, but confidence in his cause had vanished. Borne down by the failure of all his high hopes, he retired to Malmaison, and the provisional government giving every facility for his flight, he retired to Rochefort, with the design of embarking for the United States. The attempted escape was frustrated. On the 15th July, he voluntarily surrendered himself to Captain Maitland of the *Bellerophon*, claiming the protection of the British laws.

On this the final fall of Napoleon Bonaparte—for his political and military career was for ever ended—we might offer various reflections. No one has ever disputed his great intellectual abilities and capacity for governing. His moral qualities were of an inferior order. He was cruel, selfish, untruthful, wholly regardless of what sufferings he inflicted in order to compass his ambitious designs. His murder of the Duke d'Enghien, and his divorce of Josephine, would alone condemn him to infamy. There was a period in his career when, had he contented himself with being ruler of France, he might have been a blessing to that unhappy country, by developing its resources, and—if it were possible—securing permanent stability. Cherishing

the demoniac design of overwhelming all the states in Europe, and making himself the supreme arbitrator, he became, as has been seen, a menace and terror. Under a sense of common danger, the reigning monarchs united in hunting him down like a wild beast. Brought to bay after his 'Reign of a Hundred Days,' as it has been called, he was at length a friendless, helpless fugitive, pacing the quarter-deck of a British war-vessel in the harbour of Plymouth—waiting like a condemned criminal for the judgment which should determine his mortal and melancholy fate. What a climax, at forty-six years of age, to a life of perverted opportunities of well-doing!

Once more, Paris capitulated. On the 7th July, Wellington and Blücher made their triumphal entry into the subjugated city; the inhabitants being indulged with the spectacle of English and Prussian drums beating, and banners flying, as regiment after regiment marched along the Boulevards. The provisional government made an effort to resist the recall of the Bourbons, but it was rendered ineffectual by the manœuvres of Fouché; and, with the consent of the allied powers, Louis XVIII. resumed his residence at the Tuileries. In this, as in the previous military occupation, no private individual was molested. The English soldiers behaved with such laudable propriety that they had made themselves everywhere popular. Much of this good reputation was due to Wellington, for, on all occasions, he caused all matters of commissariat to be honestly paid for; whereas the Prussians, as in the case of the French armies, were too much given to the practice of forcing requisitions, and leaving destruction and mourning in their line of march.

While occupying Paris, Wellington gave a series of fêtes, to which it was deemed an honour to be invited. It was otherwise with Blücher. Brooding over the humiliation of Jena, he was only with difficulty restrained from blowing up the bridge of that name, which Napoleon had built across the Seine. He and others had their revenge in getting back those treasures of art which the French had carried off from the countries they had overrun since 1796. The Prussians recovered upwards of two thousand articles of which they had been plundered. Rome got the Apollo Belvedere and Laocoon, besides the pictures of which the Vatican had been robbed. Florence got the Venus de' Medici, and other works. Antwerp recovered the 'Descent from the Cross,' by Rubens. Venice rejoiced in getting her famous bronze horses. By these and other restitutions, enforced by Wellington, the famed galleries of the Louvre and public places in Paris were, as dépôts of stolen goods, stripped of what did not properly belong to them, and French acquisitiveness properly punished.

Next came the adjustment of indemnities. By the arrival of the Russians and Austrians, the army of occupation in Paris was swelled to above 800,000 troops, who were quartered on the inhabitants. During their stay of several months, each country put in its claim for what it had suffered by French aggression. The sum-total, including the expenses of the war, was £61,400,000; besides which heavy bill for spoliation, France had to maintain an army of occupation of 150,000 men, for not less than three years, in certain frontier fortresses.

Another account remained to be settled. It was, to inquire into and punish the perfidy of those who,

having sworn allegiance to Louis XVIII., had become partisans of Napoleon during the Hundred Days. Many were tried and banished—Soult among the number. A more stern vengeance was reserved for Labedoyère, Lavalette, and Marshal Ney. The former two were condemned to be executed; but Lavalette had the good fortune to escape from prison by dressing himself in his wife's clothes. Ney was also tried and condemned. Earnest efforts were made to save him from execution on a point of technical importance. The twelfth article of the capitulation stipulated that 'individuals in the capital should not be disquieted or prosecuted in regard to the functions they may have occupied, or to their political conduct or opinions.' Wellington was appealed to, but he officially declined to interfere—not, as is generally thought, on valid grounds—and as the king would listen to no plea for mercy, Ney suffered the penalty of death. He was shot in the garden of the Luxembourg, 7th December 1815. Murat, the *beau sabreur*, had already perished. Having landed on the coast of Naples, in the hope of recovering the throne of which he had been dispossessed by the Bourbons, he was seized, and shot on the 13th October. The fate of Napoleon was extraordinary, and justified by no existing law. Simply on the ground of being an incorrigible disturber of the peace of Europe, England, with the concurrence of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, exiled him for life to the island of St Helena, where, fretting under alleged maltreatment by Sir Hudson Lowe, he expired on the 5th May 1821.

The confirmation of peace by the victory of Waterloo, caused fresh outbursts of rejoicing in England; for the long war had pressed heavily on the national resources.

From the sum of £231,000,000 in 1792, the national debt had risen to £816,000,000 in 1815, the difference being £585,000,000; this sum, however, by no means expresses the cost of the war; for, during its whole course, there had been excessive annual taxation. As only about £60,000,000 of the debt have been discharged since 1815, about five hundred years, at the same rate of reduction, will elapse before the national debt is brought down to the point it was at in 1792. So much for the war, first with the French Republic, and afterwards with Napoleon. It should excite little surprise that the people of Great Britain are solicitous to keep in future, as far as possible, clear of continental complications.

Among the Bourbons who arrived in France in 1814 was the Duke de Berri, second son of the Count d'Artois, and who for a time acted as commander of the troops round Paris. The duke was married in 1816 to Caroline, eldest daughter of Francis, afterwards king of the Two Sicilies. On this marriage the continuance of the elder line of the Bourbons depended, for the dauphin, the Duke d'Angoulême, the elder brother of the Duke de Berri, had no children. By an unhappy occurrence, too common in connection with royalty in France, the Duke de Berri was assassinated by a person named Louvel, on the 13th February 1820, as he was conducting his wife from the opera-house. He left only one child, a daughter; but on the 29th September 1820, the widowed duchess gave birth to a posthumous son, Henry, Duke de Bordeaux, afterwards styled Count de Chambord.

The perils which the Bourbons had incurred by the Napoleonic interlude in no way opened their eyes to their true position. Clinging to their so-called inherent

rights, they did not perceive that they were to a certain extent viewed as intruders. Surrounded by priests and the old noblesse, who maintained their antiquated feudal prejudices, Louis XVIII. rendered himself very unpopular. After an uneventful reign, he died unregretted, 16th September 1824. Leaving no direct heirs, he was succeeded by his brother, the Duke d'Artois, as Charles X. The change brought no relief. There was the same ministerial incapacity, want of good faith, petty views, and excessive priestly influence. Charles took the oath to the charter, but he soon displayed an intention to restore as much as possible the absolutism of the old monarchy. Only in one thing was his reign memorable. This was the capture of Algiers in 1830. The act, by destroying a nest of corsairs, the pest of the seas, was a public benefit, but it entailed ruinous obligations on France.

During the Algerine expedition, affairs came to a crisis; a fresh convulsion was at hand, mortal offence having been given by a royal speech, also by an arbitrary dissolution of the recently elected Chamber, and a suppression of the freedom of the press. In a country accustomed to constitutional forms, the people, in circumstances of this nature, would rely for redress on peaceful agitation. This the French had not the temper to do. The Parisian populace, to whom all the revolutions of France are primarily due, took up arms, erected barricades, and set the royal authority at defiance. For the last three days of July 1830, there was fighting in the streets, and from 7000 to 8000 persons were killed. The king found himself compelled to flee. As a last resource, he abdicated the throne in favour of his grandson, Henry, Duke de Bordeaux, still a child, the

dauphin consenting to this act—but it was too late. All the members of the Bourbon family were allowed to depart quietly from the country. The Restoration had been a complete disappointment to all who expected that it would give permanent internal peace to France. A *Sixth* Revolution was effected, and all again was in a state of chaos.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### LOUIS-PHILIPPE.—1830 TO 1848.

THE Duke of Orleans, the infamous Philippe Egalité, who represented the Orleans branch of the Bourbons, left a family by his wife, the only daughter and heiress of the wealthy Duke of Penthièvre. The elder of his sons, Louis-Philippe, Duke de Chartres, fought under Dumourier in the revolutionary army, and, like that general, becoming assured that the cause of moderation was lost, fled in 1793, and took refuge among the Austrians. For a time, Louis-Philippe supported himself as a teacher in Switzerland; he afterwards travelled in America; and, in 1800, arrived in England, where he and his brother took up their residence at Twickenham. On the Restoration, he proceeded to France as Duke of Orleans, recovered his property, and lived with his family at Neuilly, in the neighbourhood of Paris. Watching the course of events, he was ready for any eventuality.

In the emergency of the convulsion of 1830, a provisional government, composed of Lafitte, Lafayette, Thiers, and other politicians, turned towards the Duke of Orleans, whom it was proposed, in the first instance, to invite to Paris to become lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and afterwards, in a more regular manner, to

become king. Thiers was the chief conductor of the negotiation. He expressed his conviction that nothing was left the Duke of Orleans but a choice of dangers, and that, in the existing state of things, to recoil from the possible perils of royalty, was to run full upon a republic and its inevitable consequences. The Chamber having declared the throne vacant, went in a body to the duke, and offered him the crown on the terms of a revised charter. The offer was accepted, and at his inauguration he adopted the title of Louis-Philippe I., king of the French; at the same time the tricolour was resumed. On taking his oath to the new constitution, Talleyrand dryly remarked that it was the thirteenth he had sworn to support.

Louis-Philippe had some good qualities—shrewdness, business habits, economy as to expenditure, propriety of conduct, and a wish to maintain the laws and public order. Tried in the school of adversity, and as an elective king, he had none of the overbearing arrogance of the legitimate branch of the Bourbons. As a novelty, he was at first popular; but from the outset of his kingly career, he experienced an exceeding difficulty in appeasing the rivalries of selfish politicians. He had only begun to reign, when Paris was convulsed with the trial of Polignac and other three ministers of Charles X., on the charge of high treason. Not that the bulk of the people took much interest in the condemnation of these persons, but the anarchists and revolutionists perceived that there was a favourable opportunity for a disturbance. Infuriated hordes vociferated: 'Death to the ministers!' Those fearful figures were seen again, which had been known in the horrors of the first revolution, which came no one knew whence,

but arose as if from the earth whenever atrocities were to be committed. The accused were only condemned to imprisonment; and by the adoption of proper measures, no serious outrage was enacted. Yet, there continued scenes of popular turbulence. The tyranny of idle ruffians produced a profound impression on the public mind, and sickened all rational people with the very name of liberty. What was the cost of this liberty but the absolute ruin of commerce and business of every description?—the destruction of peace and comfort, the perpetuation of discord and strife? One universal sigh escaped the community, and it was for the return of security on any terms or conditions. Among the middle and industrious classes especially, this feeling was intense and overwhelming. It was only by extraordinary exertions that the new government was able to allay the general disquietude.

Revolutionary tumults in France have ever led to political excitement in neighbouring countries. In Great Britain, the agitation for parliamentary reform gained at this time such force as to lead to the passing of certain well-known measures which effected extensive changes in the representation, in 1832. In the Netherlands, the excitement led to a revolution, by which Belgium was separated from Holland, and constituted, 10th December 1830, an independent kingdom, of which Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg was elected to be king.

Early in 1831, there began to be developed in France a deadly hatred against the *bourgeoisie*, or the middle classes, of whom Louis-Philippe, with his prudential notions, was held to be the representative. The accusation was, that the bourgeoisie were guilty of diabolical

selfishness and systematic robbery of the poor. It was a renewal of the insane cry of Robespierre and the Jacobins, which had been raised by the theories of Rousseau and the philosophers; but to this old cry were added a variety of fanciful arguments to shew that the *prolétaire*, or working-man, did not receive his proper share in the distribution of national wealth. To remedy the alleged injustice, the right thing to do was to establish a republic with an organisation of industry, in which the state should interfere for the protection of the working-man, and assure to him, for comparatively light labour, a remuneration sufficiently ample to procure a share of the luxuries and pleasures of life. Such doctrines—amounting to a species of Socialism or general community of goods and property—could not fail to be acceptable to the idle and disorderly. From the diffusion of these views concerning the organisation of labour, arose plots and disturbances which vexed the reign of Louis-Philippe. He had what might be called a continual battle for existence, which rendered it imperative on him to adopt those stringent and repressive measures which supplied to his indefatigable adversaries renewed grounds of reproach and vituperation. During his reign, by the advice of M. Thiers, Paris was surrounded with fortifications, at a cost of £5,500,000 sterling, to which additional means of defence were afterwards made.

An effort, not of a very imposing kind, was made to reinstate the elder branch of the Bourbons in France. The Duchess de Berri, accompanied by several friends, landed near Marseilles, 19th April 1832, with the ambitious design of placing her son, the Duke de Bordeaux, on the throne, as Henry V. After many adventures, she was obliged to hide herself from pursuit,

but being betrayed, she was imprisoned in the citadel of Blaye. Here, she made a confession that she had formed a second marriage with a Neapolitan marquis, which at once destroyed her political importance, and the government restored her to liberty.

Efforts of a similar nature were made by a member of the Bonaparte family, regarding whom some details are necessary. Louis Bonaparte, a younger brother of Napoleon, as has been seen, was created king of Holland, a position which he relinquished; his death took place in 1846. Married to Hortense Beauharnais, daughter of Josephine, he had three sons. The eldest of these died in childhood. The second, Louis Napoleon, died in 1831. The third, Charles Louis Napoleon, was born in Paris on the 20th April 1808. His birth caused much rejoicing, as that of a possible heir to the imperial throne; for, by the law of succession, the crown, in default of direct descendants of the emperor, could be inherited only by the children of two of his brothers—Joseph and Louis; but Joseph having no sons, the sons of Louis became heirs-apparent. By the death of his two elder brothers, and also the death of the Duke de Reichstadt, son of Napoleon by Marie-Louise, 22d July 1832, Charles Louis Napoleon, who dropped the first of these names, and became known as Louis Napoleon, was, therefore, legally heir to the Empire, though the Empire was, for the time being, extinct. Carefully educated under the superintendence of his mother Hortense, at Arenenberg, on the shore of Lake Constance, Louis Napoleon displayed considerable ability in the study of history and the exact sciences. From his mother, to whom he was much attached, he could scarcely fail to inherit literary, if not poetic,

tastes. Hortense was one of the most accomplished women of her time. She wrote several excellent songs, and likewise composed some deservedly popular airs; among others, the well-known *Partant pour la Syrie*, which became the national air of France.

Impelled by fancies regarding his 'destiny,' Louis Napoleon resolved to make an attempt to restore the Empire, for which he believed an opportunity was presented by the rumoured unpopularity of Louis-Philippe. Accompanied by a few friends, he appeared at Strasburg on the 30th October 1836, and endeavoured to persuade the soldiers to follow his standard. The enterprise proved a failure. He was captured, conveyed to Paris, and, by the leniency of Louis-Philippe, was deported to America. The illness of his mother caused him to return to Europe, and he was present at her death, 3d October 1837. To avert a misunderstanding on his account between France and Switzerland, he now proceeded to England, and settled in London, where he was hospitably treated by various members of the British aristocracy. While residing in London, he, in 1838, published his *Idées Napoléoniennes*, a work embracing certain theories of government, which were generally regarded in Europe as idle dreams, but in France the work went through numerous editions. In 1839, Louis Napoleon was in Scotland, and took part in the celebrated Eglinton tournament. During his visit to Scotland, he made himself acquainted with the peculiar local jurisdictions in that part of the United Kingdom.

In 1840, Louis-Philippe gratified the feelings of the Parisians by bringing from St Helena the remains of the Emperor Napoleon, and ceremoniously consigning them

to a tomb in the church of the Invalides. Taking advantage of the sentiment aroused on the occasion, Louis Napoleon once more plunged into the folly of attempting, with a few adherents, to restore the Bonapartean dynasty. He landed at Boulogne on the 6th August, but the enterprise proved as abortive as that at Strasburg. The party of adventurers were seized, and taken to Paris. Brought to trial, Louis Napoleon was condemned to imprisonment for life, and forthwith was transferred to the fortress of Ham. After an imprisonment of more than five years, during which he wrote several works, he made his escape in the disguise of a workman, 25th May 1846, and gained the frontier of Belgium, whence he returned to England.

In the reign of Louis-Philippe, the older class of French notabilities were disappearing. Lafayette, a promoter of the first revolution, but who had happily escaped from its immediate consequences, died in 1834. Talleyrand, who had played so many strange parts, and was latterly French ambassador in London, died in 1838. He left Memoirs, with injunctions that they should not be published till the lapse of a certain period after his decease. Lafitte, the eminent banker and financier, and a firm supporter of the Orleanist party, died in 1844. Almost all the men concerned in the 'Reign of Terror' had already passed away. Barras—he who had assisted at the attack on the Bastille, voted for the execution of Louis XVI., and concluded his changeful and not very reputable career as one of the Directory—had died in 1829; he left Memoirs of his times, which, being seized by the government, were never published. Among the last survivors was Barère, who was president of

the Convention at the trial of Louis XVI., and whose flowery style, in advocating the most violent measures of the extreme party, got him the name of *the Anacreon of the guillotine.* At the fall of Robespierre, he was condemned to deportation, but made his escape. During the Restoration, he lived in Belgium; but at the Revolution of 1830 he returned to France, and was appointed a member of the general council of one of the departments. His life was drawn out till 1841.

Louis-Philippe's reign was marked by social and commercial prosperity. A state of peace permitted the development of the resources of the country. Improvements were effected in different towns, an enlarged system of primary education was introduced; and France maintained, on the whole, good relations with foreign powers. Still, the king was not liked. He was considered to be intriguing, inclined to be despotic, undignified, and meanly avaricious. It must be admitted, however, that he had serious difficulties to contend with. There was a party, headed by Odillon Barrot, an eminent lawyer, with strong democratic tendencies. Thiers and his party advocated the principle that the king should reign, but not govern. Guizot and his followers formed a conservative party in the state, which would sanction arbitrary measures for the sake of public security. Besides these parties, there were underhand factions of republicans and Bonapartists. Attempts were made on several occasions to assassinate the king, as a short way of getting rid of him. The most notable of these attempts was that by a man named Fieschi, 28th July 1835, by means of an 'infernal machine,' for which he was tried and executed.

In 1842, Louis-Philippe suffered a deep affliction

# CHAPTER XIX.

## THE SECOND REPUBLIC, SECOND EMPIRE, AND NAPOLEON III.—1848 TO 1870.

THE Republic set up in 1848 bore a resemblance to that which had disgraced France in 1793. Among its promoters were men with Socialist tendencies, who had become known as Red Republicans, from the circumstance that, instead of the tricolour, they desired to hoist a red flag, significant to many of universal rapine, or at least of some very violent re-organisation of society. Administered by Ledru Rollin, Louis Blanc, Albert, Lamartine, and several others, the provisional government had great difficulty in dealing with this formidable class of anarchists. Only by great tact did Lamartine prevail on them to forbear hoisting the red flag. The tricolour, he told them, had made the tour of the globe—the red had only made the tour of the Champ de Mars! Obliged to temporise with the frenzied notions of the rabble, national work-shops were established in Paris, to give employment and wages to all applicants; soon 60,000 names were enrolled as candidates; but the chief work performed by these national labourers was careering through the streets roaring revolutionary songs,

proclaiming 'Liberty, equality, and fraternity,' and planting trees of liberty on the sides of the thoroughfares.

The ferment caused throughout Europe by the French revolutionary tumults of 1830, was nothing in comparison with that which ensued on the convulsion of 1848. On this latter occasion, the extreme party in England, known as Chartists, threatened a species of revolution in London. As a measure of intimidation, they proposed to make a popular demonstration by carrying a 'monster petition' to the House of Commons on the 10th April. Afraid that the public peace would be endangered, the inhabitants of London of all classes enrolled themselves as special constables, and, by adroit management, the demonstration was effectually baffled and turned into ridicule. It is not uninteresting to note that, on this occasion, Louis Napoleon, while in London, appeared as a supporter of law and order, by enrolling himself as a special constable to assist the authorities.

For several months the state of affairs in France was pitiable. With a universal feeling of insecurity, there was a great depreciation in the value of property, trade was paralysed, and a financial pressure ensued as terrible as that in the days of Robespierre. How bitterly did the National Guards now regret having helped to drive away Louis-Philippe, and bring about this hapless state of things! In June (1848), there was a frightful outbreak of the Red Republicans, barricades were raised, and there was an immense slaughter. The revolt was subdued by the military skill and dauntless energy of General Cavaignac. Under his protection, a Constituent Assembly prepared a republican constitution, with an elective president at the head of the government.

Louis Napoleon now appears on the stage in a character different from that which he had hitherto borne. Proceeding to Paris, and professing himself devoted to the views of the provisional government, he was elected deputy for Paris and three other departments, and, 13th June, took his seat in the Constituent Assembly. A stormy debate followed. On the 15th he resigned his seat, and left France. Recalled in the following September, and re-elected deputy, he once more appeared in the Assembly, and, through the agency of his zealous supporters, commenced his candidature for the presidency. In this he was opposed by Cavaignac, who had been in reality the saviour of his country from anarchy. So profound and ineradicable, however, was the veneration of the French people for the memory of the great Napoleon, that, despite all Cavaignac's claims and services, Louis Napoleon was preferred by an overwhelming majority of many millions of votes.

The second republic lasted three years. When the Socialists were looking forward to a new presidential election, Louis Napoleon executed his notable and unexpected *coup d'état*, December 2, 1851, by which he violently dissolved the constitution, on the ground that it was wholly unworkable, and at variance with the feelings of the people. This extraordinary measure, constituting the *Eighth* French Revolution, was, on moral considerations, obviously unjustifiable; for, assuming that the republic was a failure, there was no express obligation on the president to remain at the head of affairs: if dissatisfied, all he had to do was to resign, and retire to the private life from which he had been withdrawn. The excuse to his own conscience for perpetrating a violent overturn of the constitution, was

probably that, if he had thrown up the reins of power, the country would have lapsed into a condition of anarchy; and judging the circumstance in the light of recent events, there were certainly grounds for anticipating a result of that nature. The *coup d'état* was confirmed by the national vote. The people at large approved of what had been done; for, labouring under an apprehension of falling under the rule of the Parisian rabble, they gladly accepted an arbitrary government, which would at least allow them to live in peace and security.

France by its own will was again under the rule of a dictator. Nominally assisted by a council of state, a senate, and legislative body, Louis Napoleon, as President, was really an autocrat. Whatever may be said of the means by which he usurped this position, he did not belie his own promises of ruling the nation with firmness and benignity. The year 1852 was pre-eminently one of revival and progress throughout France, and, as if by an act of national gratitude, as well as from a continued fear of the Red Republicans, Louis Napoleon was besought to assume the position of Emperor, which he did, 2d December 1852, under the style of Napoleon III. Early in the ensuing year, he selected a lady to be his wife, qualified to revive the memories of Josephine. To this lady, the Countess Eugénie de Téba, of united Spanish and Scottish extraction, he was married on the 29th January 1853; and on the 16th March 1856, was born his son, known as the Prince Imperial.

The leading events of his reign are within every one's remembrance—the Anglo-French alliance in the Crimean war, 1854 to 1856; the attempt on the emperor's life in 1858 by a miscreant named Orsini, who was executed in consequence; the Franco-Italian war, 1859,

in which, by the victories of Magenta and Solferino, Lombardy and the Duchies were wrested from Austria. In recognition of Napoleon's services, Savoy was, in 1860, ceded by the king of Sardinia to France, and it became the two departments of *Savoie* and *Haute Savoie.* In the same year was added the territory of Nice, which now forms the department of the *Alpes Maritimes.* Various acts of wanton aggression on foreigners by the government of Mexico, led to a French army being despatched to that country in 1862. Under the auspices of Napoleon, the unfortunate Archduke Maximilian of Austria was elected emperor of Mexico; but this dignity he enjoyed for only a short period. The French having withdrawn, Maximilian fell the victim of civil war; being betrayed, he was tried by court-martial, and shot, July 19, 1867—a circumstance which caused much regret throughout Europe, and was felt to be a sore rebuff to France. Meanwhile, Napoleon had not forgotten, amid the cares of government, the literary tastes and habits of his earlier years, as was evinced by the publication, in 1865, of an elaborate and scholarly *Histoire de Jules César.*

During the reign of Napoleon III., France had all the external symptoms of national progress. Everywhere there were marked improvements. Peace and order were secured. New industries were developed. Railways were extended all over the country. Paris was renovated so as to render it the most beautiful and attractive city in the world; and if this was a too costly undertaking, the money was at least spent among the very classes who ultimately assailed the imperial rule. The most amicable relations were maintained with Great Britain, and a treaty of commerce entered into with that country.

At an International Exhibition in Paris in 1867, the emperor was surrounded by those friendly to science and art from all civilised nations, and never did he seem to receive so much popular homage.

Yet, amid all these outward tokens of respect, there were murmurs of dissatisfaction. His rule, like that of his uncle, was personal and thoroughly centralised; it satisfied neither those who wished for a constitutional government, nor insured the continuance of his dynasty to his son. To conciliate the ultramontane or extreme Roman Catholic body, he kept in Rome, for the protection of the pope, a large number of French troops and cannon; thereby giving offence to the anti-church party in the large towns of France. Years of material progress had not, in the estimation of many politicians, atoned for the guilt of the *coup d'état* of 1851. With failing health, and aware of feelings of hostility arising from these causes, Napoleon endeavoured to fortify his position, by invoking the support of the national democracy. Accordingly, in 1869, he granted a constitution, with a popularly elected assembly and a responsible ministry; to ratify which, and also ascertain the feelings of the nation regarding himself and his dynasty, he resorted to a plebiscite, or vote by universal suffrage; the result was an overwhelming decision, by eight millions of votes, in favour of the constitution and of his imperial rule, with his son as successor.

There can be no doubt that for this imposing plebiscite in his favour, he was now, as formerly, indebted to the multitude of small proprietors in the rural districts; but that such was the case, only demonstrates what may be proved by innumerable circumstances, that France, from

the unhappy social condition impressed on it by the First Revolution, is unfit to undertake the obligations of a broad electoral system. The plebiscite was in a sense a worthless sham, but for being so, the law of compulsory division of heritage was accountable—not Napoleon, who, like candidates for parliamentary honours, only took advantage of the franchise of his constituency. An appeal to a narrower circle would have been met by objections as determined as those employed against the limited electoral system of Louis-Philippe.

Though elated by the success of his experiment, the emperor had some cause for chagrin in the fact, that there was a minority of fifty thousand votes against him in the army, the main cause of which was a feeling that he had neglected to take vengeance on Prussia for having, by its victory over Austria at Sadowa, risen to a position of rivalry with France. This irrational feeling, first entertained by the army, spread to the people of Paris and other towns. Proud of their military fame, and jealous of their pre-eminence in continental Europe, they saw with pain and surprise that their neighbour Prussia, at the head of the North German Confederation, was rapidly outstripping them as regards geographical dimensions, and political and military power. The successes of Prussia, under the guidance of M. Bismark, both as concerns the Schleswig-Holstein affair (1864–65), and the humiliation of Austria by the battle of Sadowa (1866), caused the French to prepare for war with this new and supposedly dangerous rival. Four years were spent in preparations for the struggle. The older class of small fire-arms was superseded by the breech-loading Chassepot rifle, which was supposed to be equal to the needle-gun of the Prussians, and some

reliance was placed on a new engine of destruction called the mitrailleuse. All that was wanted was a pretext to declare hostilities.

That a nation should have madly rushed on destruction on a point of jealousy regarding the progress of a neighbouring people, is surely one of the strangest events recorded in history. The folly of the whole procedure is aggravated by an inexcusable ignorance of the military force at the disposal of Prussia; and, what is still more culpable in the French, an ignorance of their own incapacity. As early as 1869, Colonel Stoffel, French military attaché at Berlin, had made full reports to his government concerning the preparedness of Prussia for war, and, at the same time, earnestly warned Napoleon of the necessity for military reorganisation. He said the Germans had no wish to go to war with France, but were prepared to do so if attacked, of which they had some apprehensions. From this and other documents, there is conclusive evidence that the French government were made fully aware of the nature of the antagonist they were inclined to attack, as well as of their own deficiencies.

There is something singularly instructive and admonitory in the whole circumstances concerning the Franco-Prussian war. We, in the first place, invite attention to the Prussian military system, which has come on the world somewhat in the nature of a surprise. When the first Napoleon crushed Prussia in 1806, he imagined that, by limiting its armed force to an insignificant extent, the country would remain a poor second or third rate power. Precisely the reverse occurred. After the collapse at Jena, and when Prussia was lying prostrate under the power of France, the reorganisation of her

military resources was undertaken and carried out by Sharnhorst. The vital element of his plan was the short-service system, the design of which, while reconciling itself to the obligations imposed by Napoleon, was to pass as many as possible of the population through the drill of the regular army. From 1806 till 1813, each conscript had to serve only six months with the colours, at the end of which he was enrolled in the militia of his district. Thus, in little more than six years, there was produced a nation of trained soldiers, who, at Leipsic and Waterloo, were the main instruments in overthrowing the power of Napoleon. At the close of the war in 1815, the military force of Prussia was permanently constituted on the basis—*1st*, of a standing army; *2d*, a Landwehr, or militia of the first call; *3d*, a Landwehr of the second call; and *4th*, the Landsturm. In 1860, the system was modified, the term of service in the standing army was increased, and the Landwehr reduced to a secondary though still important position. So modified, the Prussian military system was extended to the whole North German Confederation; and the South German States in a great measure conformed to it. As thus arranged, the force that Germany can bring into the field is enormous, while the annual cost on a peace footing is comparatively small.

In the Prussian system, which now may be said to be the German system, every native is at his birth viewed as an incipient soldier; only those who become clergymen or are physically unfit being excepted. When he has completed his twentieth year, the youth is liable to be called to serve. No substitutes are allowed. On the peace footing, a certain number of recruits—about

one for every three hundred of the whole population—are drafted every year from the young men who have just reached the military age. Those who escape being drafted, and who are considerably more than those on whom the lot falls, are put on the list of the Ersatz, or Supplementary, Reserve, and are not called out, or even drilled, except in the case of a very serious war like that with France. The recruit serves three years with the colours of his regiment (with an exception to be after mentioned), and is then placed on the Regimental Reserve, where he continues four years. He then passes from the standing army into the Landwehr of the district to which he belongs. After five years in the Landwehr, he is enrolled in the Landsturm, which is called out only for home defence, in case of invasion. On the breaking out of war, the strength of the regiments is doubled, by calling up the requisite numbers from the Regimental Reserve, in which case the limits as to time of service are disregarded. If necessary, the Landwehr is also mobilised; and every man within the military age may be called out. An exception as to length of service with the colours is made in favour of those who volunteer to serve at their own cost; one year of such service stands for the usual three. These one-year volunteers are an important element in the Prussian system. They must produce certificates from school or college of a certain grade of attainments and of good conduct, as well as proof that they can provide their own outfit and maintenance; they are then allowed to join a regiment of the line.

The volunteer must strictly attend drills, parades, &c.; but when not actually on duty, he can live where and how he pleases. This saves the delicately nurtured and

well educated from mixing in the barrack-room with the humbler class of recruits; besides that the one year's services interferes less in time of peace with the civil pursuits of the middle classes. The volunteer may even serve his year before the regular age, but not under seventeen. It has long been considered a regular part of the education of the sons of a landed proprietor, professional man, or even well-to-do shopkeeper, to pass through such a course. There is always an immense mass of the wealthy and educated youth thus present in the regiments of the standing army; and as, when their service is over, they pass into the reserve, and then into the Landwehr, they contribute largely to that character of intelligence and high-minded patriotism for which these branches of the service are distinguished. It is from these one-year's men that the officers of the Landwehr are mainly drawn; during their year of service, every facility is afforded to such as shew special aptitude and aspirations to qualify themselves for promotion. It is only in the Landwehr that commissions are accessible to the middle classes. The constitution of the Prussian regular army is exceedingly aristocratic. The officers, besides being professionally qualified, must be of high standing as to social position and means—a circumstance which has at times given some dissatisfaction, but with no actual disadvantage to the service.

Few countries have increased in extent and power so remarkably as Prussia. In the early part of the eighteenth century, its population was only two and a quarter millions, and its army only 84,000 strong. At the death of Frederick the Great in 1786, its territory was doubled, and the population was five and a half millions. In the reign of his successor, another addition

was made; but the army that met Napoleon was not over 120,000. Since that time, so great has been the extension that, shortly previous to 1866, Prussia had a population of nineteen and a half millions. The Prussia with which France waged war in 1870, had twenty-four millions; including the North German Confederation, of which it was the head, the population was thirty millions. The North German army numbered 319,000 in peace, and 977,000 in war. Even on the war footing, it was calculated that there were still 116,000 trained men uncalled out, who were not beyond their period of service. This was not all. The South German States, including Bavaria, Baden, and Würtemberg, with which there were treaties of alliance, could add a war-force of 255,000. The total war-force of north and south, in a high degree of efficiency, was 1,233,000. No nation in the world can bring such a mass of soldiers into the field; and from what we have said as to the method of Reserve and Landwehr, no nation maintains an army ready for active service so cheaply. Standing armies on the old plan, while of ruinous cost, fall immeasurably short in the case of national exigency. No doubt the Landwehr system is one which could be applied with safety only in countries with a pervading spirit of loyalty, and where personal sacrifices are not grudged in the great cause of national defence.

When we bear in mind that, with the marvellously comprehensive military system of Prussia, there prevails a universal and compulsory education, an idea is obtained of the potency of any army which takes the field, comparing it especially with any military force raised by conscription or enlistment from a generally

ignorant population. The whole *mécanique*, in short, of the German armies, with their system of telegraphic communication, to keep different corps acquainted with each other's movements; and, above all, their good order and discipline, gave an immensely preponderating power against the forces of France, which circumstances had conspired to render deplorably inefficient.

The long-looked-for pretext to go to war with Prussia was found in the attempt to place a Prussian prince, Leopold of Hohenzollern, on the throne of Spain, at the beginning of July 1870. Against this proposed arrangement, the Parisians loudly protested through the press and otherwise. M. Benedetti, French minister at Berlin, was requested to ask explanations, for which purpose he followed King William of Prussia to Ems. As a measure of pacification, Prince Leopold renounced his candidature, but this did not satisfy the French government, which wished assurances that the prince's candidature should not be renewed at a future opportunity. On the 13th July, Benedetti claimed a promise of this kind from the king, which was firmly refused. This, the Duke de Grammont, French minister of foreign affairs, construed into a deliberate insult; and M. Ollivier, prime-minister, stated to the Legislative Body, that necessary measures were being taken 'to guard the interest, the security, and the honour of France.' All parties concurred in the propriety of going to war, though some, Thiers among the number, thought the occasion was not exactly opportune. A little patience would have adjusted differences; the British government endeavoured to bring about a reconciliation, but without avail—the French executive and legislature said the honour of the nation was

compromised. On the 22d July, the emperor received the members of the Legislative Body, the president of which addressed him as follows:

'SIRE—The Legislative Body has terminated its labours, after voting all the subsidies and laws necessary for the defence of the country. Thus, the Chamber has joined in an effective proof of patriotism. The real author of the war is not he by whom it was declared, but he who rendered it necessary. There will be but one voice among the people of both hemispheres, throwing, namely, the responsibility of the war upon Prussia, which, intoxicated by unexpected success, and encouraged by our desire to preserve to Europe the blessings of peace, has imagined that she could conspire against our security, and wound our honour with impunity. In these circumstances, France will know how to do her duty. The most ardent wishes will follow you in the army, the command of which you will assume, accompanied by your son, who anticipating the duties of maturer age, will learn by your side how to serve his country. Behind you, behind our army, accustomed to carry the noble flag of France, stands the whole nation ready to recruit it. Leave the regency without anxiety in the hands of our august sovereign the empress. To the authority commanded by her great qualities, of which ample evidence has been already given, her majesty will add the strength now afforded by the liberal institutions so gloriously inaugurated by your majesty. Sire, the heart of the nation is with you, and with your valiant army.'

To this address, the emperor made a suitable reply. Whatever opposition there was to the war was of a very feeble kind. No sort of public demonstration was made

against it. In the senate, the proposition to attack Prussia was hailed with the utmost enthusiasm. On quitting the hall, the senators were greeted with loud cheers, and cries of '*Vive la France! à bas la Prusse!*' In the *Constitutionnel*, were the exclamations: 'Prussia insults us; let us cross the Rhine; the soldiers of Jena are ready.' The streets of Paris resounded with the cry, '*à Berlin;*' and when the army marched off, the shopkeepers rushed forth to treat the soldiers with wine and cigars, and wish them a hearty success. Under such impulses, the emperor, on the 23d July, made a proclamation of war, in which he said 'that Prussia, launched on the path of invasion, had aroused defiance everywhere, necessitated exaggerated armaments, and turned Europe into a camp where nothing but uncertainty reigns. A last incident had shewn the instability of internal relations. The protestations of the French had been contemptuously evaded. The country had resented this with profound irritation, and immediately a cry for war resounded from one end of France to the other.'

Appointing a regency under the Empress Eugénie, Napoleon, on the 28th, left St Cloud by railway towards the eastern frontier, taking with him his son, the Prince Imperial, a boy fourteen years of age. Preserving their neutrality, yet alarmed for eventualities, the people of Great Britain looked with astonishment at this wholly unforeseen outburst. It was universally allowed that the French had received no proper provocation for going to war. At the same time, the conduct of Prussia in its dealings with Denmark in 1864, and its subsequent absorption of Hanover, Frankfort, and some other small states, had damaged its reputation; the general notion

was, that its pursuit of schemes of German unity might lead to international difficulties in which Great Britain, with all its desire for neutrality, might be somehow unpleasantly concerned. In short, if France was wrong, Prussia had incurred suspicions by its aggressions.

The principal *dramatis personæ* at the opening of the campaign were as follows: On the Prussian side—William, king of Prussia; his son, the Crown-Prince; his nephew, Prince Frederick-Charles; the Crown-Prince of Saxony; Count Bismark, chancellor of the North German Confederation; and General von Moltke. While Germany is indebted to Count Bismark for the political and diplomatic part of the work of the recent reorganisation, so to Moltke, with his profound military genius, is due the merit of the strategical. On the side of the French—Napoleon; Marshals M'Mahon, Bazaine, and Leboeuf, with some generals of less note. Besides the forces employed in garrisons, France, according to the best accounts, had in active service at the seat of war from 300,000 to 350,000 trained soldiers—cavalry, infantry, and artillery: much beyond this number it was not able to raise, and in the extremity of what may be called its death-struggle, had to rely on National Guards and *Gardes Mobiles*, both of which, in point of discipline, were unfitted to encounter a resolute well-trained force. The number of German troops, in different divisions, amounted to fully 600,000, or nearly double the forces of the enemy.

To compensate for inferiority of numbers, Napoleon relied on celerity of movement, first by massing troops at Metz, Chalons, and Strasburg, and then pushing forward across the Rhine, so as to sever the forces of North from South Germany. He had been led to

expect that South Germany was inclined to take part against Prussia, and only waited for the opportunity to do so. Here, again, he was 'betrayed,' by false information; for both North and South were firmly united to oppose the invasion of Fatherland. But the greatest mistake was a dependence on the preparedness of his own forces. They were not ready to encounter a foe for whom everything, to the minutest particular, had been provided. To the general surprise, Napoleon lost more than a fortnight after the declaration of war. His forces were detained either for want of equipments, or because they could not leave Paris, Lyons, and Algeria till garrisons were provided to take their place. In plain terms, the Germans were ready, while the French were not, besides being inferior in numbers, and inferior as regards commanders possessing the requisite foresight and strategical knowledge; and in these few words the fate of the war is explained. Instead of hastening on to Berlin, according to the tactics of the first Napoleon, and as was expected by the Parisian populace, Napoleon III. never got his army across the Rhine, and had to fight at a disadvantage within the borders of Alsace and Lorraine. The emperor did not leave Metz to commence operations till the 2d August. He was present the same day at an encounter at Saarbruck, which was magnified by French newspapers into a victory; and the affair was rendered ridiculous by the Prince Imperial being described, by his father, as having received his 'baptism of fire.'

After a first partial success at Saarbruck, the French suffered a series of disasters, such as might reasonably have been expected in the circumstances. The Germans excelled in forethought, strategy, rapidity of

action, discipline, and knowledge of the country; their whole operations being evidently guided by a central and acute intelligence. Keeping in remembrance the military glories of the First Empire, the shortcomings of the French were matter of surprise to Europe. The army appeared to be without a head. The emperor allowed directions to come from the government in Paris. His generals were checked and embarrassed in their movements, and were frequently as ignorant of the position of the enemy as they were of the topography of the district, though it was in their own country. The maps in use were full of blunders. The most woeful deficiency was the want of discipline. The men entertained no respect for their officers, and the line of march sometimes resembled a straggling mob. There was a want of alacrity in moving from point to point. On one occasion, a detachment, instead of pushing forward, waited to give a ball. The soldiers fought with the traditional valour of Frenchmen, but modern warfare is more a game of strategical movements, and cannonading at long range, than absolute hand-to-hand fighting; and in that respect the French were lamentably defective. The mitrailleuse, on which so much was reckoned, proved of small importance.

We can but run over the leading incidents. On the 4th August, M'Mahon's army-corps was almost destroyed at Weissenbourg by the Crown-Prince of Prussia. On the 6th was fought the battle of Wörth, when the Crown-Prince again defeated M'Mahon, and caused a loss of 6000 men, with thirty pieces of cannon and six mitrailleuses. On the 14th, the Prussians occupied Nancy. On the 16th, Bazaine's army was driven back on Mars-la-Tour. On the 18th was fought the battle of Gravelotte,

and Bazaine retired to an intrenched camp around Metz; attempting to break from which on the 26th, he was repulsed. On the 30th, the French, under De Failly and M'Mahon, suffered heavy losses, and were forced to retreat to Sedan, where Bazaine, being hemmed in at Metz, could not come to their succour. Drawing round Sedan, the Germans fought a great battle on the 1st September, which, by their superior artillery and generalship, at once determined the fate of the war. Perceiving that the position of the army was hopeless, and disdaining to attempt a flight, as some about him recommended, Napoleon adopted the painful alternative of rendering himself a prisoner. Writing to the king of Prussia, he said: 'Not having been able to die in the midst of my troops, it only remains for me to place my sword in the hands of your majesty.' In reply, the king expressed regret at the circumstances under which they met, accepted the sword, and designated General Moltke to treat for the capitulation of the army which had fought so bravely. An interview took place between the two sovereigns, and to Napoleon, as a prisoner of war, on parole, was assigned the palace of Wilhelmshöhe, near Cassel, to which he proceeded with a large body of attendants.

On the 2d September took place the surrender of Sedan, with the French army centred at the spot; the capitulation being signed by General Wimpffen, in consequence of M'Mahon being wounded. By the surrender, 80,000 men were made prisoners, in addition to 20,000 taken the previous day; there was likewise rendered up a vast quantity of cannon and military stores. The capture of Sedan, with such an enormous number of prisoners, was, until this time, the most

remarkable event of the kind in modern military annals. With the capture of Sedan, there was nothing to detain the main body of the Prussians from marching on Paris; which they did, leaving portions of the army to invest Strasburg, Metz, and other frontier fortresses, with large bodies of French so effectually shut up in them as to be unable to relieve the capital.

Paris was meanwhile the scene of some memorable events. When, on the 7th August, news arrived of the defeat at Wörth on the previous day, there was a general consternation. The empress convoked the Chambers, the people demanded arms, and the department of the Seine was declared in a state of siege. On the 9th, the Ollivier ministry resigned, and next day a new administration was formed by Count Palikao. On the 17th, General Trochu was appointed to the military command of Paris. With the reverses of the army, the emperor began to be depreciated, but his cause was not generally abandoned till intelligence was received of the disaster at Sedan. On him was now conveniently thrown the whole blame of the war, and it was proper he should be dethroned. The very parties who shouted '*à Berlin*' were the readiest in denouncing the war as an error, and crying for the *déchéance* (deposition) of Napoleon and the expulsion of the Bonapartes. The only thing to save the country was alleged to be a republic, for which, among the populace, there was a clamorous demand.

Sunday, 4th September, saw the fall of the Second Empire. At a meeting of the Legislative Body, a communication from the Empress Eugénie was read, appointing a committee of ministers, of which Palikao was the chief, to form a 'Council of Government and National Defence;' but the proposal met with little

attention. Jules Favre proposed the deposition of the emperor. M. Thiers would not object to the motion, but, at the instance of a number of members, proposed that the Chamber should appoint a 'Commission of Government and National Defence.' M. Gambetta was in favour of the proposition for 'forfeiture of power pure and simple.' But before any definite resolution was come to, a tumultuous throng rushed into the hall with cries of '*Vive la République!*' whereupon the president declared that deliberation was impossible, and the sitting was at an end. Intelligence of the uproar having reached the Senate, that body adjourned. Neither branch of the legislature met again, for the National Guard and other troops had fraternised with the mob, and calm discussion was impossible. It was only understood that the emperor was deposed, and that he was to be succeeded by a republic. The members of the legislature, ministers and all, had, in fact, deserted their post. In a manner most irregular, and barely intelligible, the government had been overthrown without firing a shot. A Revolution, the *Ninth* in the series, had been effected in the course of a Sunday afternoon. Count Palikao having informed the empress that he could no longer answer for her safety, she quietly departed from the Tuileries, and went on her way to England, where she joined her son, who had arrived a few days previously. Within an hour after the legislative bodies closed their sittings, members of the opposition met at the Hôtel-de-Ville, and proclaimed a republic, with a provisional Government of National Defence, composed of Gambetta, Jules Favre, Pelletan, Rochefort, Jules Ferry, Jules Simon, Ernest Picard; Kerratry, prefect of police; and Arago, mayor of Paris.

Whatever might have been necessary as regards national defence, the proclamation of a republic without the consent of the nation at large was clearly unwarrantable. A handful of politicians had, under sanction of the mob, committed what we must characterise as a gross act of usurpation. The populace, courted and feared, had once more the supreme control; once more they wreaked their vengeance on objects which reminded them of the past rule to which they had been abjectly subservient. Busts of the emperor were torn down from buildings, and tossed into the Seine. His portrait, and that of the empress, were thrown into the street and trampled under foot with the delirious joy which had been manifested in 1793 over the emblems of the ancient monarchy. The usual change in the names of streets naturally followed.

At the outbreak of the war, there had commenced a persecution of those Prussians who, following some civil occupation, resided in France. Many thousands were chased away, and in the streets of Paris many met with cruel maltreatment. After the fall of Sedan, when the Parisian populace were in a state of exasperation, this unjustifiable persecution was carried on with increased virulence, and it became customary to speak of the Prussians as 'barbarians.'

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENTS—1870, 1871—CONCLUSION.

WE have arrived at a point in our narrative where history is lost in the current of passing events—events, however, which cannot but leave an indelible impression on the memory of people now alive. What can be more suggestive of the insecurity of human greatness than that scene of turbulent passion and ingratitude, when Napoleon III., after giving peace to France, and promoting its material prosperity during a period of eighteen years, was, at a moment of misfortune, which at least called for sympathy, thrust aside with every mark of disrespect, and a state of national disorder inaugurated, of which no one can foresee the end. Bad as things had been at the dismissal of Louis-Philippe, they were now infinitely worse. A foreign enemy, as exacting as powerful, was pursuing a career of conquest in the country. The settled government had been abruptly overthrown, and the duty of repelling invasion, as well as of restoring order, was assumed by a few unscrupulous politicians. With no army in the field except some meagre fragments, and certain roving irregular bands known as *francs-tireurs*

(free-shooters), the difficulties of the situation were unparalleled. The French navy had been despatched to assail the shores of the enemy in the Baltic, but its operations came to nought. From first to last, the nation seemed to act like men bereft of their senses.

After the capture of Sedan, the war was in a great measure one of sieges. The bulk of the French army not carried off as prisoners, was shut up in fortresses, without the possibility of relief, while the Prussians were left unmolested to march on Paris, and adopt measures for its investment. On the 5th September, King William entered Rheims. At his approach, the government ordered all the forage, provisions, and live-stock in the neighbourhood to be brought into Paris. Foreseeing the impracticability of conducting the public affairs of the country within a besieged city, the government, on the 12th September, despatched Cremieux to represent them at Tours, beyond the immediate reach of the Prussians, which delegation was attended by the English and several other ambassadors. At the same time, M. Thiers was deputed to visit the principal courts in Europe, in the hope of securing allies for France. His mission proved unavailing. The resolution on all sides was to remain neutral. As regards Russia, there was reason to believe that it had a private understanding with Prussia, which pledged it not to interfere.

On the 19th September the Germans arrived in force, and spread themselves at a certain distance around, Versailles being secured as their headquarters. The investment of Paris was completed on the 21st, when the mails ceased, and all regular entrance within the impenetrable ring formed by the besieging force was stopped; a population of 2,000,000, with an enormous garrison, were

secluded from the outer world, or left to hold communication only by means the most precarious and exceptional. There was a lively expectation that relief would come from the forces at Strasburg, Metz, and other places, breaking through the lines of investment; and the credulous population of the capital, buoyed up by false intelligence, waited with a wonderful degree of composure for the arrival of these anticipated succours. It was a cruel deception. One garrison after another surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Toul capitulated on the 23d September, and Strasburg, after a severe bombardment, on the 27th, when 17,000 men laid down their arms.

In the whole affair, there was a mixture of the pathetic and the ludicrous. Driven to their wits' end for means of communicating with the outer world, the Parisians got up a manufacture of balloons, which, filled with gas from the public gas-works, formed a species of stage-coaches to fly through the air, carrying passengers who were inclined to risk themselves in the clouds, and pay the heavy cost of this hazardous conveyance. In setting off the balloons, it was necessary to study the direction of the wind. With good luck, and a suitable current in the atmosphere, and also when so fortunate as to escape a storm of Prussian bullets, these aërial machines carried passengers and mails in the required direction. By one of them, which happily escaped any misadventure, M. Gambetta left Paris, and, on the 8th October, descended near Amiens, whence he proceeded by Rouen to Tours, to help the delegated government. The balloons being unable to make return journeys, they were charged with carrier-pigeons, which, with unerring instinct, brought back letters and scraps of

public news, written in diminutive form on thin paper, tied to some part of their body.

To such miserable expedients was Paris put, with its teeming population, during this memorable siege. Amid proclamations that, for the honour of France, two millions of citizens had 'made a pact with death,' and would suffer martyrdom rather than yield, great privations began to be experienced in the course of November, after an investment of two months. Animal food of the ordinary kind was now running short. Rations of meat were served out, to the extent of thirty grammes a head daily. Horse-flesh was sold in the markets. Cats and rats became articles of fare, and, as the famine increased, were eagerly sought for. It is not for us to dwell on the horrors of the siege, nor to enter into details regarding the ever-increasing mortality from insufficient diet, and want of fuel, in a season remarkable for its inclemency. Some may call it a heroic, a noble struggle; but to onlookers it was hopeless, useless, and wasteful. The year 1870 closed with defeats, and 1871 opened with a fresh series of reverses. Faidherbe in the north, and Chanzy in the south, were equally unable to make head against the German hosts. Mézières capitulated on the 2d January. Trochu, Vinoy, and Ducrot tried a grand sortie on the 19th, and were forced to retreat. The French, under Garibaldi, had alternate successes and reverses at Dijon, which had no effect on the war. Belgium on the one side, and Switzerland on the other, were continually deluged by fugitives from the French forces. On the 25th, Longwy capitulated.

In the hope of arranging terms of peace, Jules Favre had an interview with M. Bismark at Ferrières, near

Lagny, about twelve miles east of Paris. To representations as to the desire of France for peace, the chancellor said that the king of Prussia had no wish to protract the war, but, for the future security of Germany, it was indispensable to have Alsace and Lorraine, with Strasburg, Toul, and Phalsbourg. Overcome with emotion, Favre could not consent to the proposal, and sought for an armistice, during which an Assembly might meet at Paris to consider terms of adjustment. Bismark had no objections to an armistice, in which case, however, the French would require to render up Fort Valérien by way of hostage. There the interview ended; and France, from a too confident expectation of securing better terms by continuing the war, only, as it will appear, increased the indemnity for which Prussia, by its marvellous successes, was enabled to stipulate. In response to the congratulations of the National Guard of Paris, Jules Favre said the government had sworn 'not to yield one stone of the fortresses, and not one inch of territory; and will remain faithful to this engagement'—an oath which, if taken, was in both particulars falsified.

At short intervals, the German army available for active operations was increased by the fall of the frontier fortresses. Soissons capitulated on the 16th, Schelestadt and Metz on the 27th October. This last was a severe blow to France, for 173,000 men laid down their arms, 3000 cannon were taken, and about 200,000 of the besieging force were set free to carry on the war in other parts of the country. Verdun capitulated on the 8th, and Thionville on the 24th November; after which there were successive capitulations of lesser importance. The French were buoyed up with a gleam of success on

the Loire. The Germans, who had taken possession of Orleans on the 11th October, were defeated on the 9th November by General Aurelles de Paladine, and Orleans was reoccupied; but on the 4th December the French were forced to surrender it again to the Germans. During the conflict on the Loire, the north of France was gradually overrun by the Prussians. On the 28th November, General Manteuffel took possession of Amiens.

The fortitude with which the people and garrison of Paris endured a prolonged siege caused general surprise. Besides being supported by the national ardour of sentiment, and a desire to appear united in face of the enemy, they were daily encouraged by the most mendacious statements of French successes, and by a belief in some mysterious plan which General Trochu had devised for breaking through the line of investment. But this extraordinary plan, if it ever existed, never came into operation. In one of his sorties, Bourget had been temporarily secured, and the hopes of the inhabitants were correspondingly raised. When this somewhat important position was lost, by what was conceived to be the carelessness of the military authorities, and when, at this precise juncture, news arrived of the fall of Metz, and that M. Thiers had come to discuss the terms of an armistice, the Red Republican party took advantage of the outburst of enraged feeling, and made a bold attempt to overthrow the government.

In this remarkable incident the world had an example of a revolution within a revolution. In the evening of 31st October, a mob, accompanied by some battalions of National Guards of Red tendencies, broke into the Hôtel-de-Ville, surrounded the Government of

National Defence, and made all the members prisoners except one, M. Picard, who escaped in the confusion. A new republican government was declared, embracing the names of Blanqui, Flourens, Pyat, Delescluse, and some others never before heard of. It was proposed to shoot Trochu, but he, with Jules Ferry, were at length released. By the activity of the ministers who had escaped, troops were collected; and, surrounding the Hôtel-de-Ville, they had little difficulty in securing the ringleaders, for the interior of the civic palace presented a scene of wild disorder. The newly-set-up government, which had about as much right on its side as that it dispossessed, was in office about six hours, after which there was a restoration of the Government of National Defence.

Trochu has been severely criticised for his apparent inefficiency, considering the number of troops at his disposal; but he laboured under the difficulty that the army of Paris was too large and too miscellaneous in character to be properly handled. There were 400,000 National Guards, but numbers of them often skulked from field-duty, and they were of little service except to man the *enceinte*, or outer wall. The *Gardes Mobiles*, an armed militia, numbering 180,000, of which less than a half were from the departments, were a better class of soldiers, and more amenable to discipline, but they wanted experience. Of regular troops there were only 60,000. With no deficiency in point of numerical strength, the garrison was not qualified to burst through the iron ring with which the city was girded.

To a people so sensitive of national importance as the French, the occupation of Versailles by the detested Prussians could scarcely fail to give a peculiar pang of

mortification. The palace and museum, dedicated to 'all the glories of France'—the edifice, once the scene of the courtly ceremonies of Louis Quatorze—the grand old gardens of Lenôtre—all now in the hands of the Germans, whom, in 1806, the first Napoleon had treated like dirt beneath his feet! If anything could deepen the sense of being humbled in the eyes of Europe, it must have been the circumstance of William, king of Prussia, at the request of the North and South German States, and in compliment to his sagacity and prowess, assuming the title and dignity of Emperor of Germany in the palace of Versailles on the 18th January, surrounded by a host of princes and German commanders, in whose firm grasp France was now almost in the death-agony.

Towards the end of January, the cause of 'national defence' was given up. The vaunted 'pact with death' was silently relinquished. Life with humiliation was preferable. It was discovered that in Paris there were rations of bread only for a few days. By closer advances, the bombardment had commenced, and shells were falling in the part of the capital on the left bank of the Seine. In this dire extremity, Jules Favre, considerably lowered in tone, applied for another interview with Bismark, which was agreed to on the 26th. The meeting took place at Versailles, and the bombardment ceased on the 28th. An armistice for twenty-one days was granted, to afford time for convoking a national assembly qualified to determine the question of peace or war. It was stipulated that all the forts round Paris were to be surrendered with their war material; the *enceinte* was to be disarmed of its guns, and the troops were to be made prisoners of war, only the National

Guards and other municipal forces being allowed to retain their arms for the internal protection of Paris. Not to wound Parisian susceptibilities, the German army was to refrain from marching through the capital. Paris was to pay a war contribution of £8,000,000. The armistice was, properly speaking, a capitulation, and the news that such had taken place caused grave concern at Bordeaux, whither the delegation of government had for safety transferred itself from Tours.

In Great Britain and other countries, the intelligence of a cessation of the murderous strife came with a sense of relief. From the 21st September to the 29th January, the siege of Paris had lasted four months and seven days. Several more days elapsed before supplies of provisions could be introduced, for large tracts of country in the neighbourhood had been reduced to the condition of a desert. The Germans sent some cattle to re-victual Paris. England despatched large contributions of various kinds of provisions, which were thankfully received by the famishing population. Quantities of seed-corn were also freely contributed, to enable the ruined peasantry to sow the lands which had been laid waste; while numerous societies of benevolent individuals sent medical and surgical appliances to assuage the personal sufferings inflicted during the bitter military contest.

The provisional government appointed, as its name implies, for national defence, did not by any means confine itself to that definite object. It assumed powers of general legislation, and acted in every way as if entitled to exercise autocratic rule. This was especially conspicuous in the delegated portion of the government at Bordeaux, represented by Cremieux and Gambetta,

who, guided by their own will, issued decrees in as high-handed a style as ever signalised the despotism of Louis XIV. A decree, issued 27th December (1870), 'dissolved the General Councils in the departments, the Councils of the Arrondissements, and the Departmental Commission in France. The General Councils were to be replaced by Departmental Commissions, the number of their members corresponding to the number of cantons in each department.' This was nothing short of a violent dismissal of all constituted municipal authorities, with the substitution of parties favourable to the new order of things, or who, for the sake of place, affected to be so. The delegation went a step farther. In view of the election of members to a National Assembly, which was to meet at Bordeaux for the purpose of settling terms of peace with Prussia, Gambetta and his colleague issued a decree on the 31st January, proscribing certain categories of citizens —Legitimists, Orleanists, and Bonapartists—who were not to be entitled to be representatives. Scandalised by so flagrant an outrage on the law of election, the government at Paris issued a counter decree (February 5), declaring that 'the restrictions imposed by the decree of the delegation were null and void, as being incompatible with the principle of universal suffrage.'

Considering that a large part of the country was occupied by foreign troops, the elections were accomplished with considerable ease. Against the convoking of the Assembly, Napoleon, in his exile at Wilhelmshöhe, issued, on the 8th February, a manifesto, forming a species of protest against the whole proceedings; but it received no attention. The National Assembly met on the 12th, in the theatre at Bordeaux, and on the

following day, Jules Favre, in his own name and that of his colleagues, resigned their powers to the representatives of the people—he and the others only retaining office till their successors were appointed. On the 17th, M. Thiers was elected chief of the executive, with power to name his ministers. On the 19th, his selection was announced—embracing Dufaure, minister of justice; Jules Favre, minister of foreign affairs; and Picard, as minister of the interior. The policy which Thiers recommended was, that all, be they monarchist or republican, should lay aside differences, and work for the good of the country, until the form of government could be determined by the national will. On the motion of Jules Favre, a committee of fifteen deputies was appointed to assist the ministers to treat with Prussia for terms of peace.

The negotiations at Versailles, which occupied six days, terminated on the 26th February, when preliminaries of peace were signed. The terms fixed by M. Bismark were of the most exacting nature—a war indemnity of five milliards of francs, or £200,000,000 sterling, payable within three years; Alsace, and the German part of Lorraine, with Metz, to be ceded, but Belfort to remain with France; as a guarantee until the indemnity was paid, Champagne to be occupied by the Germans at the cost of France; on payment of the first instalment of £20,000,000, the Germans to be removed from the neighbourhood of Paris. M. Thiers made strenuous efforts to secure less severe terms, but without avail. Bismark was inexorable. The alternative was either acceptance, or recommencement of the war next morning. There was no choice but to sign, and the armistice was extended to a few days longer, for the terms to be

ratified by the Assembly. Accepted by the committee, the preliminaries were on the 1st March ratified by 546 against 107 votes. At the sitting on the occasion, the Assembly confirmed by acclamation the deposition of Napoleon, though this did not come within the scope of its appointment. Thus were matters arranged for terminating a war the most humiliating in which France had ever been engaged. When subdued in 1814, it was by the united forces of nearly the whole of Europe. Now, in a war of but seven months, it fell before the military power brought into the field by a single nation —that which was roused into military strength and unity by cruel indignities, for which a heavy expiation was now to be sorrowfully made.

On the 1st March, part of the Prussian army entered Paris; but while the troops remained, they, by agreement, limited the occupation to the Champs-Elysées and places adjoining on the right bank of the Seine. With peace, the principal forts were vacated by the Germans, and the ambassadors of foreign powers resumed their residence in Paris, which, long shut up, now began to receive the visits of strangers, and to recover its former appearance. Vacating Versailles, the Emperor of Germany and suite returned to Berlin, where, on the 17th March, he was received with lively demonstrations of loyalty and affection. The Germans, who had some reason to boast of what their arms had accomplished, summed up as follows the results of the war. The united German forces had fought 156 battles, 17 of which were of the first order. They had captured 26 fortresses, 6700 cannon, and 120 eagles and colours; and had made 11,650 officers and 363,000 men prisoners. There had, however, been a great loss of life; there

was mourning in innumerable families; and, by the abstraction of men for the army, much of the business of the country had been at a stand. The Germans were accused of committing a variety of outrages, such as robbing peasantry, destroying hamlets, and making heavy requisitions in their line of march. It has not been shewn, however, that in this respect they exceeded the ordinary practices of the French, or what Napoleon I. inflicted on Prussia and Austria.

Besides suffering the captivity of its army and loss of territory, France incurred pecuniary obligations by the war, which it was ill able to undertake. The funded debt, at the conclusion of the reign of Louis-Philippe, amounted to £182,000,000. The short second republic added £63,000,000, raising the debt to £245,000,000. The reign of Napoleon III. added £305,000,000, by which the debt at the fall of the Empire amounted to £550,000,000. Then came the expenditure of the Government of National Defence and the heavy war indemnities, which, according to the best authorities, will raise the French national debt to £1,050,000,000, requiring an immense annual charge for interest, which, with current expenditure, cannot but press severely on the national resources. At the conclusion of the war, the host of prisoners was sent back to France. Napoleon, also being allowed to depart, arrived in England 20th March, and took up his residence with the Empress and Prince Imperial at Chiselhurst in Kent.

In the magnitude and suddenness of the war, the prodigious successes on the one side and defeats on the other, and in the changes likely to ensue in European politics by the exaltation of Prussia and corresponding depression of France, the people of England, as near neighbours

and onlookers, had an absorbing interest. One of the remarkable circumstances connected with the contest, was the enterprise of the English press, in employing correspondents to accompany the respective armies, from whom intelligence of all the important events was daily communicated by telegraph in the space of a few hours. For this 'war literature,' as it has been called, produced under great difficulties and at enormous cost, the thanks of all are unquestionably due.

Towards the conclusion of the war, opinions regarding the respective belligerents underwent a change. The French were not held excusable, but it was thought they were harshly treated—reckoned with in a sordid and too vengeful spirit. The exercise of a little more magnanimity might perhaps have been a better line of policy. It is true that Prussia was warranted in demanding some species of territorial guarantee against future attempts at invasion; and it is likewise true, as has been shewn in these pages, that the territory exacted had originally pertained to the German empire. France only lost what it had in no very creditable manner acquired in the reigns of Henry II., Louis XIV., and Louis XV. But time had obliterated recollections of these bereavements. Alsace and Lorraine had become essentially French, and it might have occurred on reflection, that—supposing France be not doomed to some new catastrophe—the seizure of these districts may, by laying the foundation of lasting national enmity, lead to the result which it was designed to avert.

While the plenipotentiaries of the two nations were proceeding to settle the definitive Treaty of Peace at Brussels, France, as if destined to endless distractions, suffered the infliction of civil war. It was not without

a well-founded apprehension of being rudely disturbed by an invading Parisian rabble, that the Assembly, previously to quitting Bordeaux, resolved to sit at Versailles instead of the capital. They accordingly did so; the ministers, however, preferring to betake themselves to their official bureaux in Paris. Thus affairs continued until Saturday, 18th March, when, a fresh revolution breaking out, Thiers and his ministry fled to Versailles.

With a powerful German force still within hail, with the stipulated indemnity still unpaid, with the country still prostrated by that terrible war, and when there was the greatest need for general concord, Paris revolts, assumes an attitude of fierce defiance and independence; and acts are committed reminding one of the saturnalia of 2d September 1792! The causes of these disorders throw a curious light on the French character. The extension and beautifying of Paris by Louis-Philippe and Napoleon III., had attracted from the provinces large numbers of artisans to the capital. Napoleon, through the active aid of Baron Hausmann, prefect of the Seine, did so much in the way of city improvements, that he boasted of having put an end to revolutions, by making street-fighting no longer practicable. In the Faubourg St Antoine, and other densely peopled quarters, he made new lines of broad thoroughfares, which, being laid with asphalt, provided no store of paving-stones wherewith barricades could be constructed. His expectations were illusive. Dispossessed of their old haunts, the prolétaires flocked to Montmartre and Belleville, within the north-east and easily defensible faubourgs. Here sprung up the citadel of Red Republicans—the men who, thrown out of employment

by the war, crowded into the ranks of the National Guards, and were kept alive by a pay of thirty sous, or fifteenpence a head per day during the siege.

The prospect of having to lay down their arms, and so lose the daily pay for soldiering, was in itself calculated to arouse revolutionary sentiments; but there were other causes for discord. During the universal havoc, the government had kindly, but, it is to be feared, with little knowledge of social economics, decreed the suspension of various pecuniary obligations, such as paying rents, debts, bills, and interest on mortgages. Now that peace had dawned, and things were about to settle down in the old routine, there was an alarming anticipation among the indebted classes of being compelled to satisfy their landlords and creditors. Here lay a fund of explosive discontent. Ever since the overthrow of the Empire, those in authority had talked of the country being under the rule of a republic. Thiers professed a wish to uphold the republic, while, in reality, there was no republic to uphold. The nation had not yet voted for a republic; and, judging from the temper and proclivities of the rural population, probably would not do so. There were still other causes of dissatisfaction. The selection of Versailles as a seat of legislature appeared like a design to decapitalise Paris. In short, the Parisian republicans apprehended that now, as on previous changes of government, their views were likely to be subordinated to some conservative or dynastic influence. Among the fifteenpence men of Belleville there was a resolution to stand this no longer. Paris should be free, and have a government of its own.

When it was too late, Jules Favre discovered

that a fatal mistake had been made by the National Guards being allowed to retain their arms for the sake of preserving public order in Paris. This was simply arming the populace, and enabling them to assume the domineering attitude for which they had often contended. Plans were arranged for disbanding them. Being summoned to deliver up their cannon and small-arms, they were at the moment inclined to obey; but, by culpable negligence, the execution of the order was for a few hours delayed, and the disaffected battalions of Belleville prepared for resistance. Joined by others, and also by regiments of the line, they had the capital almost immediately at their mercy. Several officers of the line shamefully went over to the side of the insurgents; some did their duty at the risk of their lives. Two generals, Lecompte and Clement Thomas, being deserted by their troops, were taken prisoners, and shot. M. Thiers issued proclamations calling on the peacefully disposed inhabitants to assist in restoring order. His efforts were vain. Without organisation or the habit of aiding the authorities, the middle and higher classes looked on with dismay or indifference. The executive being powerless, took shelter at Versailles. Paris was in the hands of the Red Republicans. The tricolour was pulled down, and the red flag, the standard of anarchy, hoisted on the Tuileries.

A Central Committee, presided over at first by a M. Assi, constituted the ruling authority, and proceeded to establish a commune embracing the whole capital—meaning by that, a sovereign power which should make its own laws, levy its own taxes, and regulate in every respect its own affairs. Other cities, if they pleased, might each have its commune, and all the communes of

France would form a federal union of republics, which would be represented in a National Assembly, and there, by their number and importance, withstand the deadening influence of representatives from the rural districts. Such, briefly stated, was the proposed plan of national government, which bore a resemblance to that of the Italian republics in the middle ages. In the bewilderment of active but untutored minds, groping for relief against inveterate centralisation, the Reds of Paris fell upon the idea of setting up an independent government. There was something pitiable in the notion; for, by the smallest exercise of common-sense, it would have been seen that, in the existing half-subdued state of the country, with the Prussians at hand waiting for payment, the system of independent communes could not be carried out, and that, supposing this difficulty had been removed, an attempted federation of communes could only end in national disintegration.

In the discussions on the subject, the fact of the cities in Great Britain being governed by councils freely elected by the inhabitants, was quoted in justification. But it escaped notice, or perhaps was not understood, that these municipalities are created by the legislature for special local purposes, and that their members, having sworn allegiance to the sovereign, are in all their acts strictly limited by statute. Erring in their notions, and involved in the ruffianly proceedings of anarchists, the Commune, elected under the inspiration of the Central Committee, took the reins of government, and became a general terror. Succumbing to the audacity of a comparatively small number of men, who, from their habits, had no practical knowledge of government, Paris was exposed to distractions exceeding what

had been suffered during the siege. Banks, insurance offices, and other public establishments, were laid under contribution; churches and private dwellings were pillaged; various newspapers were suppressed; individuals incurring suspicion were unwarrantably seized and imprisoned; and, at a peaceful demonstration, several persons were killed by a fusilade from the insurgents. To shew their republicanism, adherents of the Commune had the weakness to imitate the early revolutionists, by abandoning the ordinary calendar. The month of March they called Germinal, of the year 79, such being the reckoning from 1792. A sorry attempt was also made to restore the practice of wearing 'caps of liberty.'

As a measure of conciliation at the outset, the Commune won over the greater part of the tenants in Paris by decreeing that all rents due since October preceding were remitted. Since the first Revolution, the state of Paris had never been more critical. Many families took to flight; a large number of shops were shut; the post-office authorities went away; and there were no longer mails to or from England. Barricades were constructed preparatory to defence against any troops which the government at Versailles might send to attack the capital. From standing on the defensive, the Federals, as the Commune called themselves, proceeded to carry the war beyond the barriers, and there were almost daily encounters with the Constitutional troops, commanded by M'Mahon, Ducrot, and others. On several occasions there was great slaughter, with much destruction of property. In one of the encounters, Flourens, who acted as a Federal commander, was killed. What seemed incomprehensible was the temporising policy of Thiers. He agreed that if the insurgents would

lay down their arms, Paris should enjoy the right of electing its own communal council; but, with strange inconsistency, he caused a law to be enacted (8th April) by the Assembly, conferring on the government the power to appoint the mayors of all the cities and towns in France having a population over 20,000—a decree as arbitrary as if the British executive were to take power to appoint the chief magistrates of all the large towns of the United Kingdom.

The irresolution and feebleness of the provisional government may perhaps be excusable in the consciousness of its own defective title. The Assembly had been professedly elected only to determine the matter of peace or war, and since that was settled, it was officially defunct. Its sittings were now a usurpation, without any more legal validity than the sittings and acts of the Parisian Commune. The country had degenerated into the extraordinary condition of having two governments, each of them self-appointed, and each doing as it liked. At the end of April and beginning of May, the condition of affairs was lamentable. After running through a course of theories and follies, the government and statesmanship of France had sunk to the dregs. Political ability, common sagacity, disappeared. Like a huge derelict vessel, the wreck of a noble country was apparently drifting hither and thither to destruction.

Our narrative is concluded. The history of France and its Revolutions has been told; perhaps with too much brevity, but in a manner, we trust, to convey a tolerably clear idea of how a nation, by a series of errors, may bring itself to the brink of ruin. In seeking for the

fundamental cause of the accumulated calamities of France, some will doubtless fix on the normal qualities of the French mind—love of novelty, vanity, fickleness, impulsiveness, a deficiency in the reflective and moral faculties. A country which gave birth to Montesquieu and Fenelon can scarcely be said to be unable to produce either profound thought or piety. French literature glitters with a host of brilliant writers. Arts and sciences also claim a long list of renowned Frenchmen. The fact, nevertheless, is evident, that, with so much to be proud of, the French people lack the capacity to understand, and, most of all, practical intelligence to conduct, what we know by a constitutional government. They commit the grievous error of accepting names for things, as if not aware that the form of government must depend on the mental qualities of a people, as well as on the materials fit for carrying on the public business. No experience has taught the French this important principle. Even those amongst them reputed as possessing the highest intellects in the country, often think and act in political matters scarcely like rational beings. They demonstrate an unconsciousness of the stern yet beneficent obligations imposed by a constitution such as that under which the people of the United Kingdom have the happiness to live. So strange are the freaks performed, that it would almost seem as if there were in every Frenchman's mind an incapacity to see the importance of keeping, on all occasions, strictly within the bounds of law, along with a propensity to find an excuse for committing irregularities according to fancied notions of justice, or the pressure of circumstances. An inability to 'keep to order' in official proceedings appears to be inherent in the French character. Arthur Young's description of

what he saw in 1789 would apply to the Assembly at Bordeaux and Versailles in 1871.

If there be something to blame, there is not a little to pity in the history of the French. The nation was cruelly maltreated under the old noblesse. The centralisation extended and confirmed by Richelieu, and perpetuated under Louis XIV., arrested all healthy national life. The suppression of free religious thought, by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, was a death-blow to the progress of intelligence. Under a better and more genial state of things, the natural levity of the French character might have been sobered, and the country spared the convulsion of 1789. That convulsion we have pointed out as being inevitable—a result of misusage, but it need not have been attended with frantic schemes to uproot every cherished feeling and institution. The excesses committed from 1792 to 1795, developed a savage ferocity lying hid under an external politeness and suavity of manner, which has never, so far as we know, received the special attention of psychologists. Perhaps it may be partly due to the long course of outrage and vicious example under the old despotisms; but even now, after the modifying influence of time, it is still, on occasions of public excitement, painfully evident.

The old monarchical despotisms, with all their imperfections, were favourable to the growth of great men. The era of French genius of the highest order extended from the reign of Louis XIV. to the Revolution. Then began a decline towards a frivolous and undignified mediocrity, with but few expressions of bold and ingenious intellect. Since the First Empire, French literature has no doubt been enriched by the works of many

distinguished writers, of whom we may only name Guizot, Lamartine, Thiers, Comte, Victor Cousin, and De Tocqueville; but the remarkable thing is, that all the efforts of literature fail to stimulate the higher emotions to any practical advantage, or to counteract that downward tendency in society towards a mean uniform level, which is obviously a result of the extinction of monarchy, the abolition of aristocracy and of the law of primogeniture, and the compulsory equal division of heritage among children. To these primary deteriorating causes have been added the disturbing effects of continual revolutions, the diversion of the public mind towards the vain phantom of military glory, and a general break-down in religious convictions. With nothing of an enduring kind to venerate, respect, or to rally round; with no affections clinging to the past, or hopes anchored in the future; with life a series of temporary expedients—a round of inanity and fleeting indulgence—how, on a scale worth mentioning, can there be anything great, good, or wise? Colonel Stoffel, in the state-paper to which we have referred, speaks with surprising candour of the failings of his countrymen, when pointing out the difference between the Germans and French. 'The Germans,' he says, 'are manly, not corrupted by sensual pleasures, possess earnest convictions, and do not think it beneath them to reverence what is noble and lofty. The French, on the other hand, having sneered at everything, have lost the faculty of respecting anything—virtue, family life, patriotism, honour, religion, are held by a frivolous generation to be fitting objects of ridicule; the nation a jumble of disorderly elements; a country so full of self-conceit, that everybody pretends

to be able to fill the highest office in the state.' A foreigner could have said nothing more severe.

To this issue the principles of 1789 have brought France. What a solemn warning does it offer against relinquishing realities for theories! Theories have landed the bourgeoisie and rural population of France in the unhappy position of having nothing to stand between them and anarchy but some kind of elective autocrat. It is unjust to heap opprobrium on Napoleon III., as if he were the cause of the evils which afflict and throw discredit on the country. Whatever be his share in the mischief, we must search deeper into history. There would have been no Napoleon but for the execution of Louis XVI. and the many other outrageous proceedings of the revolutionists, by which the whole social edifice was destroyed, and the political life of the nation reduced to a succession of spasmodic efforts, in one of which for a time Napoleon played his part, as Louis-Philippe had done before him. The whole series of events, from the meeting of the States-general until 1871, are but consecutive parts of a single and very melancholy drama, of which the last act has been civil war, with the occupation of the country by a foreign army. To shroud their own follies and blunders, the French are in the habit of throwing the blame on whoever happens to be placed at the helm of affairs, and of saying that they have been 'betrayed,' 'sold.' Yes, truly, they have been sold, but it was by themselves. The bargain they made was a poor one. They sacrificed their king and constitution for the tricolour—sold their country for a rag!

Whether, under any form of government that can be projected, France will be able to fulfil its onerous

pecuniary obligations, is doubtful; and a failure in this respect may precipitate changes still more extraordinary and humiliating than any that have yet occurred. In the brightest view of affairs, as matters now stand, the country cannot save itself from the guidance of despotic and centralised officialism, because it has not only divested itself of those elements of social stability on which a proper constitutional government can be founded, but because even its educated classes have not the faculty to comprehend the restraints prescribed by a constitutional system. Trading politicians may affect to desire, the populace in their misguided fury may proclaim, a republic. With that the degraded condition of France is plainly incompatible. Call the government which is set up by any name you please, it will be nothing but a species of despotism. Nor, sad to say, can any improved system of government be looked forward to, so long as an unruly Parisian mob is suffered to overturn at pleasure the rule generally preferred by the nation.

All persons of any feeling will sympathise with the French in their heavy afflictions. But, looking to the past—and especially to the manner in which government after government has been heedlessly and indeed disgracefully laid in ruin—candour obliges us reluctantly to remind them (in proverbial phrase) that they may 'Read their Sin in their Punishment.'

THE END.

Edinburgh:
Printed by W. and R. Chambers.